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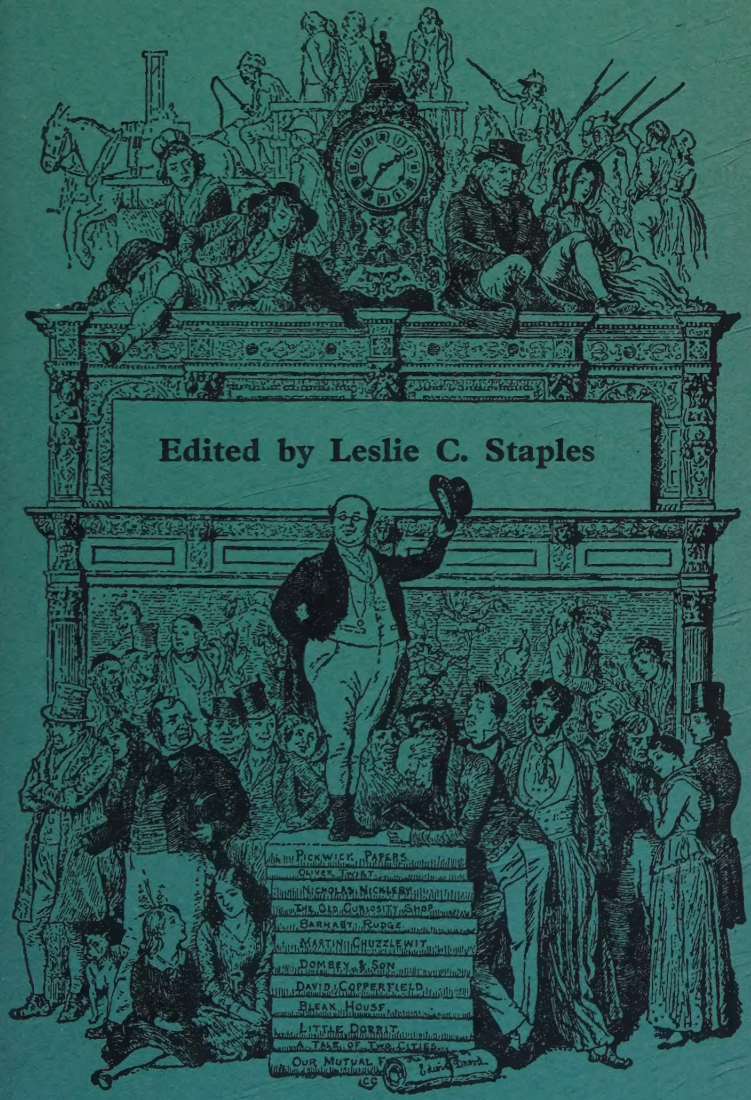

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THE HUMOUR OF DICKENS

EDITED BY

R. J. CRUIKSHANK

WITH TWENTY FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

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ARTHUR HORNER
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The Proceeds to be Devoted to
THE DICKENS HOUSE ENDOWMENT FUND
(Walter Dexter Memorial)

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H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother
receives Mr. Emlyn Williams
during an interval at
the Dickens Fellowship's
Golden Jubilee Matinee
at Theatre Royal, Drury Lane
October 30th, 1952

(see page 32)

News Chronicle photograph

THE DICKENSIAN

Dickens Fellowship Jubilee Souvenir Number

Vol. XLIX. DECEMBER 1952 No. 305

WHEN FOUND—

Jubilee The Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Dickens Fellowship which are recorded in this number of *The Dickensian* will be found to be a story of unbroken success. The ambitious and novel plans were laid two years ago, and in spite of many vicissitudes, all came to the happiest fruition, culminating in Royal Patronage, by patient and painstaking endeavour. It is universally agreed that the celebrations were fully worthy of the occasion, and the Fellowship now resumes its normal work, encouraged, fortified, and revivified.

* * * * *

Overseas Guests A happy prologue to the celebrations was an afternoon reception for our overseas visitors at the Dickens House on Sunday afternoon, September 7th. Mr. and Mrs. Livingston Stebbins of Boston, Mass., who were to celebrate their Golden Wedding a few days later, were specially fêted. A beautiful cake decorated with golden roses was brought from Boston by their colleagues. This was cut by Mrs. Stebbins and they were toasted in a bowl of punch.

* * * * *

Miss D. L. Minards The presentation at Conference to our Assistant Secretary, Miss Minards, as reported on another page, marks the completion of her thirty years' devoted service to the Fellowship and to the Dickens House. Only those who have served the Fellowship as officers can have any adequate idea of her work for it. Tireless and selfless, the Fellowship owes more to her than can ever be expressed. Its multifarious activities have never found her at a loss whether she herself instituted them, as she frequently has, or not. It would seem that there is nothing the Fellowship undertakes that she cannot master and either successfully accomplish or materially assist to that end. Members at home and overseas will wish her well and rejoice that her work has been still further recognised by her presentation to H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, at Drury Lane on October 30th.

The B.B.C. During the past weeks there have been televised and broadcast several important programmes of great interest to Dickensians. First there was the broadcast in celebration of the Centenary of the Hospital for Sick Children, at Great Ormonde Street, during which Emlyn Williams delivered Dickens's famous speech in aid of that institution. Then came a notable televised introduction of the book which the *News Chronicle* has published in aid of the Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial). After the conclusion of the week's Tour of Dickensland, Mrs. H. E. Bagley, of the Boston (Mass.) Branch, broadcast her impressions of it on the B.B.C.'s Overseas Service. It was repeated in "Eyewitness." Finally, there was the broadcast in the series "They Lived Here," in which Audrey Russell, assisted by Mr. Greaves and Miss Minards, introduced listeners to the Dickens House.

* * * * *

Little Dorrit's Church The happy restoration of the Church of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, Little Dorrit's Church, was celebrated by a Service of Rededication by the Bishop of Southwark on October 16th. A partial restoration not long before the war, probably prevented the total destruction of the church by the bombing that followed. After the terribly severe damage it sustained, it is now more beautiful than it can ever have been within living memory. Dickensians who visit it now will find it one of the most handsome eighteenth century churches in London. We offer our congratulations to the indefatigable rector, the Rev. Cyril E. V. Bowkett, who would be glad to receive contributions to the heavy cost of restoration, which has now to be met.

* * * * *

St. Pancras Book Week A most interesting "Evening with Charles Dickens," on October 10th, formed part of the Book Week held by the libraries of the Borough of St. Pancras. Beautifully-executed Readings from the novels by Carleton Hobbs, were followed by a performance of "The Strange Gentleman," by the Tavistock Repertory Company. The evening ended with a stimulating discussion between Mr. L. A. G. Strong (our President 1950-52), Mr. Collin Brooks, and Lady Cynthia Asquith.

* * * * *

Mancunian Centenary Manchester has celebrated the centenary of its Public Library. Inaugurated on September 2nd, 1852, it was the first in the country to operate under the Public Libraries Act of 1850. At the meeting held on that day, Dickens, always a strong advocate in such matters, was among the speakers. Thackeray was another. The lead then established has been well maintained, for it is doubtful if any other English city has a Public Library finer than that opened by King George V in 1934. The celebrations in September, which were attended by representatives of the Manchester Branch of the Dickens Fellowship, included the unveiling of a plaque com-

memorating Sir John Potter, Chairman of the First Library Committee, and Edward Edwards, the first Librarian, whose signal achievements set the pattern for Public Library work in England for fifty years.

* * * * *

A False Shrine Yet another unusual book on London has come from Mr. William Kent, *London Mystery and Mythology*, which will find a warm welcome among London lovers everywhere. Its chief interest for Dickensians, and it has much, lies in a full history of the so-called Old Curiosity Shop in Portsmouth Street. Alas, we wish it might be possible that this further exposure would scotch the legend, but it has taken so firm a root that it may well be doubted whether even Mr. Kent's documented indictment will counteract the convictions held by several generations of tourists. Those who know Mr. Kent will not be surprised at the barb in the tail of his account: it serves to drag a favourite red-herring across the path. But the engaging little book is none the less entertaining on that account.

* * * * *

The Signalman What is believed to be the first dramatic version of Dickens's well-known story, *The Signalman*, is to be staged at Esso Cinema, Fawley, Southampton, on December 21st. Entitled *Death on the Line*, the adaptation is the work of Eric Jones-Evans, an actor well known for his Dickens character impersonations.

* * * * *

To be noted Too late for notice in this issue are the Recital by Richard C. D. Shuckburgh from his great-grandfather's works, at Crosby Hall, Chelsea, on December 12th, in aid of the Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial), and the eagerly-awaited *première* of the film, *The Pickwick Papers*, on November 14th.

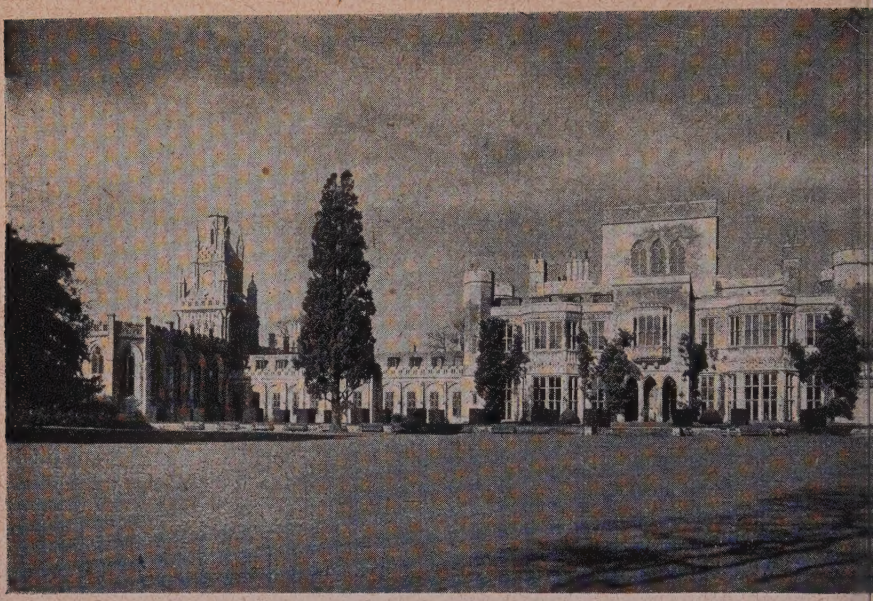
* * * * *

Competition An interesting competition was organised by the *News Chronicle*, in connection with their publication of *The Humour of Dickens* (see p. 11). Competitors were required to cast the principal Dickens characters illustrated in the book, from lists of present-day stage and screen stars. One of the five prize-winners was Mrs. Wm. Kellaway, who, not long ago, was caretaker at the Dickens House.

* * * * *

Our Thanks This issue would be lamentably incomplete without a tribute to the *News Chronicle*, the successor to Dickens's *Daily News*. Without its generous aid our Golden Jubilee celebrations would have lacked a great deal of those qualities that have brought us such valuable publicity and conferred such brilliant success. We tender our most grateful thanks to its Editor, Mr. R. J. Cruikshank, and to all his staff, among whom the name of Mr. Hugh E. Powell must be singled out for especial gratitude.

LESLIE C. STAPLES.



FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

AT ASHRIDGE

THIS year's Annual Conference of the Dickens Fellowship, as befitted the importance conferred upon it by the Golden Jubilee of the Fellowship's foundation, broke entirely new ground, insofar that the members were housed under one roof, Ashridge, for the entire week-end. The gain, on the social side of things, was enormous and the subject of much congratulation.

Members arrived on the afternoon of Friday, September 12th, to be received by "Mr. Pickwick" (Mr. Colin Cox) and the Chairman of the Council, Sir John Shuckburgh. They found their temporary home to be a splendid mansion, entirely at their disposal, an historic building standing on the site of the "retired house at Ashridge, by Berkhamsted," of which Dickens wrote in *A Child's History of England*, and surrounded by extensive gardens and a great park welcoming them in the autumn sunshine. This was the setting in which, for three days, members from Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom were to mingle and confer, and ultimately to depart to their branches having forged new links in the chain of Dickensians around the world.

After dinner, Captain Henry Gordon, Secretary of Ashridge, gave an address in the Lecture Hall, formerly the Ballroom, on the history of the house and the purpose and aims of the College now established here.* Captain Gordon, now so thoroughly

* Readers are recommended to *This is Ashridge*, an illustrated history by Capt. Gordon, published at Ashridge College, Berkhamsted, Herts., 2*s*. 6*d*.

identified with the place and having all these matters both at his finger-tips and in his heart, kept his audience in rapt attention, and at the end was rewarded with rousing applause. Then followed:

The Chairman's Address

Taking as his theme modern estimates of Dickens as shewn by recent biographies, Sir John Shuckburgh said that Forster's great book was certainly incomplete as it omitted, or at least slurred over certain aspects of the great novelist's career and character; there were secret closets behind the state-rooms of Doughty Street and Gad's Hill from which the inquisitive public were rigorously excluded. It is to these closets that some recent biographers claim to have found the key. But raking among the ashes of dead genius in order to bring some forgotten scandal to light is a sordid and disagreeable business. Tennyson had some bitter things to say on this subject:

> "Proclaim the faults he would not show;
> Break lock and seal; betray the trust;
> Keep nothing sacred; 'tis but just
> The many-headed beast should know."

"Mr. Pickwick" receives the visitors at Ashridge. The group includes members from Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.A.

News Chronicle photograph

But despite the ash-raking Dickens remains indispensable to the modern writers of Victorian reminiscences; he cannot be kept out of any book on nineteenth-century England. Yet that estimate is in danger from the modern craze for phrase making. He is credited with all sorts of political and social theories of which I believe he was entirely innocent. The statement has been made that *Little Dorrit* had a more revolutionary and disruptive effect than Karl Marx's *Das Kapital.* This is absurd. *Little Dorrit* did strengthen the hands of those who were trying to reform the Civil Service, as *Bleak House* assisted reformers of the legal system and *Nicholas Nickleby* helped to abolish Yorkshire schools. This was due to Dickens's warmth of heart, his inborn hatred of cruelty and wrong, and his deep, generous instinct; but he did not, like Marx, sit down to work out on paper a social system based on a cold foundation of preconceived theory and stripped of human sentiment in all its more intimate aspects. Let no one presume to claim Dickens as the champion of this faction or that; he stood

above all factions. Humanity in its highest sense was his one political and social creed, and that is why he still makes an irresistible appeal to the true instincts of every human heart, and also why we of the Dickens Fellowship look back on half a century's successful pursuit of a task that is worth the doing. We remember with gratitude and pride our founder, B. W. Matz's enunciation of our aims. Matz's daughter is happily with us to-day to share in our satisfaction at the fruition of her father's work.

Above all, we hope that our work is being worthily discharged, and, in all humility of mind, try to think of it as of a nature that would commend itself to the mighty shade of Charles Dickens himself.

. . . . . .

Later in the evening came a programme of music of the Dickens period, given in one of the great lounges under the direction of Mrs. Jane Bacon, by a group of singers in Dickensian costume. This was greatly to the taste of the house-party, and it was quite late before the singers were allowed to go and the visitors returned to the ballroom for dancing.

The Business Meeting

Saturday morning was occupied by the Business Meeting, held in the Lecture Hall. According to custom, a beginning was made with a roll-call of branches, which revealed that no less than fifteen members had made the journey from Boston, Mass.

The Report of the Council was read by Mr. Greaves. An admirable and witty review of which, it is regretted, only a brief account can be given here. Mr. Greaves outlined the astonishing outcrop of manifestations of things Dickensian, in the theatre, in the cinema, in broadcasting, in publishing, in education, and in the visits of foreign press representatives. In a great many of these matters the Dickens Fellowship had been consulted, although if its advice was not invariably accepted, consultation was in itself a matter of congratulation, and nearly all resulted in some kind of benefit to our aims. Among the year's events which were of valuable direct assistance to us were the Dickens Dinner at the Festival of Britain, South Bank Exhibition, and the London Transport Board exhibiting posters of literary London. The total number of branches is thirty in the United Kingdom and thirty-two overseas. Our work goes on and prospers and there is every reason to view the future with optimism.

The Hon. Treasurer's Report was then presented by Mr. Mitchell, who opened his remarks with keen expressions of

gratitude to Messrs. Morris, Gregory and Co., of Manchester, whose Senior Partner, Mr. H. E. Evans, is a very old member of the Fellowship, for their most valuable and generously given services as Hon. Auditors. The accounts presented a favourable aspect in all departments. The audited balance sheets would be printed in *The Dickensian* in due course.

The nominee for the office of President during Jubilee year was Sir Gerald Barry. It was explained on behalf of Council that Sir Gerald Barry had already done a very great deal for the Fellowship in planning and furthering the Jubilee celebrations, although owing to the postponement of Conference to coincide with those events, his election had not been possible until now. Both Executive Committee and Council supported this nomination most strongly. The proposal was carried unanimously and with enthusiasm.

The existing officers and Vice-Presidents and the Hon. Auditors were re-elected with acclamation. The acceptance of Manchester's invitation for the 1953 Conference was confirmed, and that of Portsmouth for 1954 accepted. The Book for Study for the season 1953-54 was to be *Oliver Twist*.

Mr. Mitchell made graceful reference to the presentation to the Dickens House by Mr. Leslie C. Staples, of a fine replica in oils of the Maclise portrait of Dickens, by Marjorie Rodgers (Mrs. D. Wray). This gift, in celebration of the Fellowship's Jubilee, was most acceptable, he said, as the portrait was the most famous of the Doughty Street period of the novelist's life.

A feature of the meeting, not on the Agenda, that occasioned the very greatest pleasure to everyone was a presentation to the Assistant Secretary, Miss D. L. Minards. Mr. Greaves recalled that it was thirty years ago, precisely, that Mr. C. H. Green, then Hon. Secretary, was empowered by the committee to engage clerical assistance. He engaged Miss Minards, with the most far-reaching benefit to our work and progress. In asking her to accept a gold wristlet-watch in recognition of her devoted service for so long, and as a token of the regard in which she was held by members throughout the world, Mr. Greaves said that no feature of the Jubilee could be more propitious than that it should coincide with the completion of her thirty years' service, composed, as they were of highly successful, industrious, and ingenious labour. The plan of holding this Jubilee Conference here at Ashridge was her own idea, now so happily crowned with triumphant success, a consummation it owed more to her work and unflagging enthusiasm than to any other cause. Taken entirely by surprise,

Miss Minards expressed in a few words her appreciation of the gift and all it represented.

The motion before Conference that the Rule laying down that *The Dickensian* be included in subscriptions to all branches formed since 1927, should be suspended for two years, was prefaced by a statement by the Hon. Editor to the effect that shortly before Conference it became known that a number of N. American branches, who were represented that morning by Mr. Noel Peyrouton of Boston, Mass., were opposed to this suspension, and that they desired to propose that the magazine should be included in every subscription, irrespective of the date of the formation of the branch. In view of the widely differing views of branches on this point, the Editor proposed that the matter be again referred back to Council, for further consideration. After discussion, this was put to the vote, and carried.

. . . . . .

After lunch motor coaches took the visitors through the Hertfordshire lanes, some to Knebworth where they were received by the Dowager Lady Lytton, and her daughter, Lady Hermione Cobbold, and shown over the house so well known to Dickens in his "splendid strolling" days, and the others to Ayot St. Lawrence, where they visited Shaw's Corner, the home of "G.B.S." In the evening the Lecture Hall was converted into a cinema, and members enjoyed a series of extracts from News-Reel films of many Dickens Fellowship functions, followed by a showing of the Metro-Goldwin-Mayer film of *David Copperfield*. It was interesting to note how out-moded the technique of this film now appeared, but the acting stood up nobly to revival, and with one notable exception, it would be difficult to cast the film nearly so well to-day.

Sunday morning was left free, apart from prayers in the beautiful chapel, which was full each morning. Taken by Captain Gordon, the simple services which were aided by the fine organ, made, as always, a distinctive beginning of the Ashridge day. The weather, not *too* sure of itself during the week-end, behaved magnificently during the morning and the beauty of the surroundings was fully appreciated. The afternoon was again occupied by the two motor coach excursions, so that everyone had a chance to visit both places.

After tea, again following Ashridge tradition, there was a highly appreciated lecture by Mr. Humphry House, Lecturer in English Literature, Oxford University, on "Fifty Years of Dickens Criticism."

Finally, after dinner, came a *Pageant of the History of the Dickens Fellowship*, by Mrs. Jane Bacon. This was staged on the Grand Staircase. High above, the commentary was spoken by Mrs. H. E. Evans, of Manchester, and down the broad stairs on either side descended figures illustrating every phase of the Fellowship's fifty years' history. Tributes were paid to B. W. Matz, the founder, and to Walter Dexter, who did so much to carry on the work. Representatives of the earliest branches to be formed passed down in procession, the Fellowship's work for the blind, the crippled, and for service folk in war-time was not

forgotten, nor were the Trial of Jasper, *The Lighthouse*, and other dramatic productions. Nothing was omitted: down they came in two continuous streams while the clear voice of the commentator rang out, telling the story they illustrated. At the end there came a few words from the founder's daughter, Miss Winifred Matz, after which the Conference concluded with a toast in steaming punch, and the Jubilee Cake.

The panels at the head of pages 8 and 9 are reproductions of those, each nine feet long, designed, executed, and presented by Mrs. Mary Giles, of the Nottingham Branch, for the decoration of the Grand Staircase at Ashridge during Conference. The opportunity of this note is taken to express to her once again the gratitude of the committee and the members. Photographs by Brian Greaves. View of Ashridge kindly lent by Ashridge College.

A PICTORIAL REVOLUTION?

By T. W. Hill

MR. R. J. CRUIKSHANK'S latest book on Dickens,* like everything else he has written on this absorbing subject, is well worth close study, but it has had a disturbing effect on my thoughts as, innocent as it appears at first sight—merely selected examples of Dickens's humour accompanied and adorned by the work of some of the best-known caricaturists and cartoonists of the present day—it also contains the ingredients of an explosion that may convulse the Dickensian world by destroying all the traditions established by the illustrators of the past, as well as the germs of an entirely new outlook on the art of illustrating Dickens in the future. Its publication in connexion with the Dickens Fellowship's Golden Jubilee seems to have a special significance, and may provide an incentive for continued study of the work of the great novelist.

This little book, and it is little to be the source of such a revolution as appears possible, can be considered in two aspects: (1) the letterpress, and (2) the illustrations.

(1) The choice of humorous passages is, as Mr. Cruikshank confesses in his admirably written Foreword, an entirely individual and personal one, but, of course, Dickens's humour is so all-pervading that it illuminates almost every episode in his stories. It is not that Dickens drew humour out of his subjects, but the humour that he put into them that gave him the immense influence that he exercised over his readers, contemporary as well as modern. There is nothing particularly humorous about the training of boy-thieves, until you meet the Artful Dodger and listen to one of the lessons of Fagin, that "merry old gentleman." There is nothing inherently humorous in the contemplation of a man who lives largely by self-advertisement until you read of the antics of Vincent Crummles. An obscure little school-teacher in an obscure little school would not necessarily be seen in a humorous light until you read the arithmetical sum set by Miss Peecher including an expensive outfit for a black-hearted school-master who does not care a jot for her. And so one might go on picking out

* *The Humour of Dickens*, published in aid of The Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial) *News Chronicle*, 3s. 6d.

instances. And Dickens did not confine his sense of humour to his published works; it ran over in abundance into his correspondence. His letters provide many examples and each has a serious note behind it. Recall his frantic letters to Henry Austin about the water supply and the drainage at Gadshill. Or his harrowing description of the internal sufferings of the clock that would not go.

Yes, Mr. Cruikshank is fully justified in presenting his own selection of humorous passages from Dickens, which does not preclude others from preferring their own, as there is room for all.

(2) Now we come to the illustrations with which this little book is embellished. My first reaction is that " it all depends " on what you are looking for. Let us note that 1952 is the centenary of 1852, a date that has some significance as it was almost exactly the centre of the period of Dickens's activity as a writer of fiction. Eighteen years before—1834—Dickens was writing *Sketches by Boz*, illustrated by the great George Cruikshank (do I hear whispers of " caricaturist " ?) and eighteen years later—1870—he died in the middle of *Edwin Drood*, illustrated by Fildes (do I hear whispers of " orthodox artist " ?). Is Mr. Cruikshank, in obtaining the assistance of such talented colleagues to illustrate his selection, completing the full circle and going back to the purely humorous, and to some extent back to exaggeration and caricature ? The question is worth consideration, especially if the gradual development of illustration to Dickens's works is reviewed. When Dickens secured George Cruikshank, the most popular draughtsman of his time, as his illustrator for *Sketches by Boz*, it was an immense asset to a young ambitious author, and no doubt helped to increase the sales of the book. For the *Pickwick Papers* Dickens had first Seymour, not essentially a humorist but an artist, who specialised in open-air sporting misadventures, and then came Hablôt Browne, who under the pseudonym of " Phiz " (to match the Boz of Dickens) carried on the style of Cruikshank. Now, neither Cruikshank nor Browne was a caricaturist in the sense of holding up to ridicule, but only in emphasising or slightly exaggerating certain features in order to excite laughter, and Phiz carried on the standard set by Cruikshank, as can be seen by a comparison of their work in the *Sketches by Boz*, wherein in the picture of Greenwich Fair, Cruikshank, by a very few delicate touches of emphasis conveys the vulgarity of the crowd, and in *Pickwick*, where, when Mrs. Bardell is brought to the Fleet, Phiz very successfully draws the contrast between the lady's nervousness and Mr. Pickwick's disdain, although he does introduce genuine caricature in the delineation of Mrs. Cluppins. That period of the nineteenth century was a time of cruelty in the criticism of anything one did not approve. That style had derived from the savagery of the caricatures of Gillray and Rowlandson. and ugliness was deemed mirth-provoking; personal deformities and misfortunes were sources of amusement; even the vagaries of a drunken man were laughed at. The great Cruikshank sometimes shews a spice of sadism; one of his ideas of humour was to seize his victim by the nose in a pair of tongs and then draw that

feature out to a length of three or four feet, the victim writhing the while from the pain. In the course of time moderation began to be observed, and the complete process of softening can be well observed by studying the successive volumes of *Punch* as that periodical was issued regularly every week. The apparently ill-natured caricatures gave way by almost imperceptible gradations to more correct portraiture, the satire being relegated more and more to the captions accompanying the drawings.

To resume my survey of Dickens's illustrators:

Browne, under his pseudonym of "Phiz," continued to illustrate Dickens for twenty years, until *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), and during this long collaboration there is noticeable a gradual change in the pictures as indeed there was in Dickens's style of narrative: the tendency to over-emphasis as in the case, for instance, of Mrs. Gamp, gave way to gentler methods as, for instance, in the case of Chadband, a quite credible person when compared with another unattached reverend gentleman, Mr. Stiggins. The style of the earlier caricaturists would not have been acceptable to the readers of a century later. The satire, because it was written instead of being presented in a drawing was not the less biting, and Dickens himself shewed this when he wrote beneath the picture of the children at the Brighton Academy, "Doctor Blimber's Young Gentlemen as they appeared when enjoying themselves."

After *A Tale of Two Cities* there was a lapse of five years before Dickens published his next great novel in monthly numbers, *Our Mutual Friend*, 1864-65, and he dropped Phiz, all of whose illustrations had been etchings, employed the young Marcus Stone whose style differed in almost every particular; his work was sober and straightforward, reflecting the altered taste of the period, and etched plates gave way to engravings on wood. All signs of exaggeration or caricature disappeared and the illustrations were very much in accordance with the change in Dickens's own maturer narrative method. For his last book, *Edwin Drood*, Dickens chose another young but rapidly rising artist, Luke Fildes, who again belonged to the modern school of strictly orthodox draughtsmanship. There is not the smallest trace anywhere of any idea of exaggeration, every picture is most carefully drawn and, as his sketch-book shews, Fildes made many rough studies of limbs, hands, and other details before attempting a picture as a whole.

So ended the succession of illustrators directly employed by Dickens. After his death, his works continued to attract artists, and in 1875 Fred Barnard illustrated most of the novels in the Household Edition. Barnard carried on the academic manner of Stone and Fildes, but put in a little more action and shewed an occasional hint of the characteristics of Cruikshank and Browne.

Early in the present century came Cecil Aldin, Frank Reynolds and Harold Copping, each of whom seems to have endeavoured to refine still further the Dickens characters; they become (shall I say) respectable, by idealising and almost beautifying them.

Even Harry Furniss, a professedly humorous *Punch* artist subdued his naturally high spirits when he undertook to illustrate

a complete edition of Dickens's works, and indulged in very little exaggeration with no sign of caricature. To complete this stage in Dickens illustration it must be added that none of the artists mentioned, besides many others whom I have not named, ever departed from the standard of Dickens himself that an illustrator must "illustrate," and that every detail in the picture must reproduce every minute detail in the text. Dickens had ruled his illustrators with a rod of iron, insisting that, whether it was a great creative artist in his own right like Cruikshank, an amenable draughtsman like Browne, or young aspirants to fame like Stone and Fildes, the illustration must follow the text. The consequence was that the figures depicted in Dickens's books during his lifetime became accepted almost as a gallery of portraits of living people, and did, in fact, become types from which no subsequent artist ever deviated to any great extent. Presentation might be a little modified, but the original Pickwick was still the same Pickwick whoever drew his picture, the first portrait of Gamp is seen always, Pecksniff the original is only redrawn, and so through all the books. And this custom prevailed after 1870.

During the last twenty years or so a new school of humorous drawing has arisen. No longer is the same attention to detail observed and elaborate draughtsmanship has given way before a style that seems to depend on deliberate exaggeration and even mis-drawing of features and gives the impression of being purposely ill-drawn and apparently imitated if not inspired by the kind of drawing that a mischievous child with a piece of chalk would use to disfigure a wall or a hoarding. It must have a risible quality or it would not be so popular with comic journals, but it has one quality that the caricatures of a century and a half ago missed; it is more sedate and less coarse and cruel than they were, and it does not seek to hold up to ridicule deformities and other misfortunes.

All this leads me to remark that Mr. R. J. Cruikshank has most judicially chosen the band of skilful artists of the modern school of humorous drawing who have illustrated his selection of humorous passages from Dickens. The most noticeable difference between their work and that of previous illustrators is that they have entirely abandoned the former convention of reproducing with extreme care the details in Dickens's descriptive text. Each artist has evidently absorbed the character of his subject, taken as a whole, throughout the book in which that subject appears, and then, throwing all precedent aside, has drawn his own personal conception of the character as it appeals to himself. The consequence is that the result may be widely different from the figure that has been hitherto been accepted by readers of Dickens. Look at Pecksniff as drawn by Ronald Searle on page 35; is this the open-throated, no deception Pecksniff so minutely described by Dickens? But it is most assuredly a *real* Pecksniff. He looks quite capable of exasperating the already excited and truculent Spottletoe and will with cunning and concealment listen in the church with relish to Tom Pinch's denunciation and will then discharge him with enjoyment. Now turn to page 124 and examine Michael Cummings's Mr. Chadband. It presents diffi-

culties. Is this really Mr. Cummings's idea of the oleaginous creature " in the ministry " but of " no particular denomination," who has a great " bear's paw " of a flabby hand, and walks or shambles along like " a bear which has been taught to walk upright " and enters a room saying, " Peace be on this house," and is prepared to " improve a tough subject " like Jo after having tried to bilk No. 1782 of eightpence ? It seems probable that this picture of a flamboyantly-dressed debonair individual relies on the Reverend Chadband's favourite expression, " Oh let us be joyful, joyful." And yet, Mr. Cummings has somehow managed to convey the possibilities of all these attributes of Dickens's creation (but I wish he did not wear a flowered waistcoat). And what a striking contrast he presents to his stern, unbending wife Rachel. The temptation is strong to examine separately each one of these clever, carefully-drawn sketches, for each is worthy of close examination.

The recent change in taste as to the possibility of arousing fun and humour from " near-caricature," and depending on comic presentation, omitting the coarseness of a century and a half ago, may have some significance for us. It may be an indication that modern humorists will now essay a complete series of illustrations to Dickens's works. If Mr. Cruikshank does envisage such an outcome from his selection of talented draughtsmen and humorous passages the works of the greatest humorist that England has produced, he will indeed have heralded the approach of a revolution in the art of illustration, and may probably attract an entirely new set of admirers to take up the books that poured from the prolific pen and irresistible humour of our great novelist. At any rate, judged by any standard, Mr. Cruikshank's volume seems to me to open new vistas in our national literature, and it will be fascinating to watch for any new development.

BURLESQUE

It is of no use. No one writing of the history of the British Theatre during the past century can escape consideration of Dickens. He loved the stage and his influence permeates its story. But V. C. Clinton Baddeley, excellent Dickensian that he is, doubtless has no desire to escape it. His fascinating book, *The Burlesque Tradition* (Methuen, 18s.) traces the history of burlesque in the English Theatre since the Restoration. The story takes us from Davenant and Buckingham, through Gay, Fielding and Sheridan to Gilbert and Shaw, but Dickens, like King Charles's head, will bob up. Those who number the Crummles scenes among their prime favourites, will find much to amuse and interest them on that subject too. The book is beautifully illustrated. L. C. S.

Mr. T. W. Hill's Notes on Dickens's novels are held over for lack of space. They will be resumed in our next issue with the first instalment of Notes on *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Mr. Malcolm Morley's articles on the dramatic adaptations of the novels have been interrupted for the same reason. The stage history of *David Copperfield* will appear in March.

EDITOR.

RECEPTION BY THE DICKENS FAMILY

ON the afternoon of Monday, September 15th, following their return from Ashridge during the morning, members attended a Reception at Crosby Hall, Chelsea, where they were received by Mrs. R. S. Shuckburgh and Mrs. Waley, grand-daughters, Mr. R. S. Shuckburgh, and Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh, M.C., great-grandson.

The beautiful old hall, the setting of a scene in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, and some forty years ago removed to Chelsea from the city, now provided a delightful setting for a London welcome to the delegates after their sojourn in the depths of Hertfordshire.

During the afternoon Mr. Richard Shuckburgh gave an address during which he recalled some literary associations of Chelsea, particularly mentioning Sir Thomas More, who had for a few years lived at Crosby Hall when it stood in Bishopsgate, and remarked that it now stood on ground that had once belonged to his Chelsea home. More was described by Dickens as one of the most virtuous men in King Henry VIII's dominions. It was from Chelsea that More, who had been Lord Chancellor, was sent to the Tower and the scaffold. As Dickens said, "to be a friend of that fellow was almost as dangerous as to be his wife." More and Dickens were both humanitarians and men of high principle; More died for his beliefs and Dickens wore himself to death in the cause of humanity. Both had a sense of humour and More could jest even on the scaffold, as probably Dickens's Sam Weller would have been capable of doing in like circumstances and as many a Cockney did in the nerve-wracking experiences of the two World Wars. Mr. Shuckburgh recalled that Dickens was married at the parish church of St. Luke, Chelsea. Another Dickensian and literary association of Chelsea was Carlyle, who lived in Cheyne Row, where Dickens frequently visited him, and from whence went the cab-load of books that helped Dickens in writing *A Tale of Two Cities*.

With reference to the title he had chosen for his address, "The Founder of the Feast," Mr. Shuckburgh pointed out the saving grace of humour that inspired all Dickens's work, and said that Dickens drew a sharp distinction between the humourless reports and pamphlets issued by the serious reformers of his day, such as Lord Shaftesbury, in their fight for betterment, and Dickens's Olympian laughter at the things he attacked, although they all had a common object. In Dickens's hands, Chancery and the law's delays and expense became a joke; Mrs. Jellyby was a joke, Poor Law and Bumble was a joke, teaching children to steal by Fagin's method was a joke. Such evils were laughed out of existence as readers became suddenly aware of the need for their removal, and Dickens further aroused the feeling that fundamentally we were all brothers and revealed it through the fat mouth of the virtuous humbug Chadband when he told Poor Jo that he was "not a stick, or a staff, or a stock, or a stone, or a post, or a pillar, but a human boy": "O glorious to be a human boy!" Mr. Shuckburgh concluded, "Is not Charles Dickens here with us and can you not feel about you that strong unconquered and unconquerable spirit pouring out its love for all humanity, as I always feel it when I am with the Dickens Fellowship?"

THE JUBILEE BANQUET

Chairman: Sir GERALD BARRY, President

Speeches by

Sir Alan Herbert
Stephen Potter
Hon. Mr. Justice Cassels
Sir Hugh Casson
Sir Compton Mackenzie
Livingston Stebbins
Leslie C. Staples

THE Banquet in celebration of the Jubilee, in effect also served as the Annual Conference Dinner, and in addition saw the launching of *The Humour of Dickens*, the book published by the *News Chronicle* that morning in aid of the Funds of the Dickens House (see p. 11).

Nearly four hundred guests assembled at the Dorchester Hotel on the evening of September 15th under the chairmanship of the President, Sir Gerald Barry, who, before introducing the speakers, gave a special welcome to the distinguished artists who had given of their art to illustrate *The Humour of Dickens*, many of whom were present, and also paid tribute to Mr. Emlyn Williams who had most generously undertaken to give a performance of Readings from Dickens at Drury Lane, to the same end. Sir Gerald went on: " . . . I should like also to welcome all the other members of the Fellowship to-night from overseas, from the Commonwealth and from cities of the United States. Blood may be thicker than water, but perhaps there are times when ink is thicker than either. With a common tongue and a common solvent of laughter, it may prove an inestimable bond of understanding between the peoples of the world; and in this tense, angry, snarling world to-day, it is perhaps for the relaxation of laughter, which Dickens, the master humorist, gives us, and which opens the floodgates of compassion and humanity, that we should, among all his other incomparable qualities, most honour and admire him."

SIR ALAN HERBERT, in proposing the toast of the " Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens," asked: " How would Dickens have got on, how would he have enjoyed himself in this crazy world in which we live to-day ? " and answered his question: " There are two ways of answering that question. Gilbert and Sullivan would get bad notices and a short run. I am not sure what sort of reviews Charles Dickens would get to-day, but at least, I am sure that he would laugh at them. What fun he would have with the pools, nationalisation, speed faster than sound, and all the rest of it ! And I am sure he would laugh at the things at which we are now laughing.

" Now, the memory of Dickens is without doubt immortal; mine is rather short. I confess that I read all his works when I was very young, and I confess that, although I know all the characters, I do not always remember in what book they occur. It is like meeting an old friend and not being able to remember whether you met in the House of Commons or at the dog races. But I do most unhesitatingly assert that I am a ' fan '; and, if it came to a long term of imprisonment—as it may do any day—and I had to choose the author I should be permitted to read, it would certainly be Dickens.

" As a mere working scribe there are one or two things I should like to say. I have never been astonished at great works being written in instalments against the clock—after all, there is a great deal of advantage in that; you can change the plot as you go along, as governments do, but what has always struck me is the amazing accuracy of this author. May I mention specially *Our Mutual Friend*—one of the books I should have in my gloomy cell—because it is about London's river. Many modern fiction writers never know which way the tide is running. The villain suddenly escapes from his pursuers; there is a fast motor-boat into which he leaps; it is the work of a moment to cast off and start the engine. But if it were low tide, the boat would be lying in the mud! Now look at the first page of *Our Mutual Friend*, where the body-snatcher and his daughter are in their little boat, and you find this sentence: ' The tide, which had turned an hour before, was running down, and his eyes watched every little race and eddy in its broad sweep, as the boat made slight headway against it, or drove stern foremost before it . . . ' In the book, the scene is laid between Southwark Bridge and London Bridge, but Dickens knows something about the river and describes what is happening. ' As the boat drove before it '; ' drove ' there means drift, and the word ' drove ' is the word still used by London bargemen. By that one small sentence Dickens showed exact knowledge of the physical character of London's river.

" It occurs to me that I ought to say something about social reform. I hate the word ' social '—it smells of damp! No Englishman, nowadays, is allowed to do anything for fun, and few will confess that they do anything for fun. The fox hunter rides forth full of good social reasons; nobody goes horse racing, or even betting, for fun—it is all for the improvement of British bloodstock. And so when Dickens is really funny, nowadays we find it necessary to say he was thinking of some social reform. I like to see this opinion confirmed in a glorious little book I acquired just now, in which Mr. R. J. Cruikshank says: ' There has been a tendency in recent times to overlook the fact that Dickens was a great humorist, the greatest humorist of the English-speaking world. A notion has grown up that the humour of Dickens is a regrettable lapse on the part of an eminent economist —as though John Stuart Mill had been caught making a pun. It is true that Dickens was filled with compassion for the weak, the poor and the defenceless, but it was also true that he had in him the springs of divine laughter. He had a profound sense of the world's wickedness and was in no doubt about original sin, but he did not see why he should not laugh.' And that seems to me to sum-up the whole thing much better than I am able to do.

" We find good and practical reasons for thanking God for Charles Dickens as a writer. In 1837, *Pickwick Papers* appeared, and Queen Victoria came to the throne. Not a bad year. In 1870, Charles Dickens died. Thirty-three years is not a very long time, but in that time what a monument of triumph was built up. Horace said: ' I have built up a monument more enduring than brass.' Charles Dickens has done the same thing. What an impressive background of men and events in those years! Peel,

Palmerston, Disraeli, Gladstone, Prince Albert, Louis Napoleon, the 'Hungry Forties,' Industrial Revolution, Chartist Movement, Crimean War, and in the year of his death, the Franco-Prussian War. A tremendous background, and yet the great little man stands up now and for ever, as Horace stands up against the Generals and great men of the Roman age.

"It was about a hundred years ago, I think, that *Bleak House* and *David Copperfield* were written. A little less than one hundred years ago, the Crimean War took place. How many of you can place your hand upon your heart and swear you know what the Crimean War was about? We all know what *Bleak House* and *David Copperfield* were about. How many words do you remember that Prime Minister Peel said? But we all know what Sam Weller said.

"Yesterday was the centenary of the death of the Duke of Wellington—a very great man—a very great Englishman, but if we were given the opportunity to go into a higher place and spend an hour with Wellington or Dickens, the great majority would choose Charles Dickens. That is assuredly right, because he was the Prime Minister, Field Marshal and Bishop of his own people. That is the thought we keep in our minds. These days, writers are no different from underwriters; poets are the same as pawnbrokers. I think it is that that we must bear in mind, and as we salute the glorious memory of this great man, we may, for a moment, kid ourselves we are important too, and shelter under his wing."

Mr. Stephen Potter, supporting the toast, said that he had always been interested in trying to fathom the exact moment when the great writers first got into their stride—first, as it were, spoke with their own individual voice. "In the case of Shakespeare," said Mr. Potter, "perhaps it was one or two lines in *Love's Labour's Lost*—the last thing in the play, the song 'When icicles hang by the wall.' In the case of Dickens I also have a view which I would like to propound to you. One of the tales which is interlarded with the *Sketches by Boz* is called 'The Boarding House.' I always consider that early piece, long before *Pickwick Papers*, was the actual start of Dickens. It seemed to me, when I first came across it, the most wonderful thing I had ever read; it seemed a wonderful new world, I thought it was so funny and so true. Stage Two followed in my twenties. In the twenties, you are rather inclined to run things down. You say all those awful things, those criticisms, those clichés: 'Dickens, oh, yes! a romantic writer, and all this business of Dickens and sentiment.' And you feel ashamed of having been moved by the death of Little Nell. After this wilderness of being superior about Dickens which we all pass through, you come back. It may be through *Our Mutual Friend*, or *Little Dorrit* or one of the others which did not appeal to you very much as a child. Dickens, it seems to me, anticipated the technique of radio. When broadcasting, in a sense you are working for blind men. You are writing not for the ear so much as for the eye. You have to remember, as Shakespeare did, that you have to appeal to the eye of the imagination and to think, when we speak of horses,

you will see them. That is precisely what Dickens does. In *Our Mutual Friend*, you *see* the young man sitting in the corner, who, when addressing the foreign gentleman, leans forward, says: 'Esker,' and relapses into silence."

The Hon. Mr. Justice Cassels, proposing the toast of the Dickens Fellowship, said: "If there should be any amongst this distinguished company who think that I am not qualified to propose the important toast of the Dickens Fellowship, I desire to assure them that they are quite right. I make no claim to be a Dickensian, with a profound knowledge of all the works of Dickens, or of the somewhere about two thousand characters that he created, or of the scenes he word-painted for us, all of which are part of our language and literature; but, as I read and enjoy the many biographies which have been written about Charles Dickens—for, indeed, there are more books about Charles Dickens than Charles Dickens ever wrote—I cannot help reflecting that in the steps, to some extent, of my own inglorious career I have followed in his earlier footsteps and have been associated with some of the names and places which he made so familiar.

"You all know that, in his 'teens, Charles Dickens acquired the knowledge and practice of shorthand; so did I. I, too, wrestled with the mysteries that engaged David Copperfield. Charles Dickens, before he was twenty-one, was a reporter in the press gallery of the House of Commons; so was I. Charles Dickens reported trials at the Old Bailey; so did I. Charles Dickens used to report political speeches in the country and transcribe them in the coach which galloped him to the office in London; but, in my case, I used to push it over the post office counter and it was duly wired to London. Charles Dickens reported Parliamentary Elections and gave us Eatanswill; so did I—but, in my case, my contributions are, quite rightly, dead and buried in the files of the newspaper that employed me.

"In 1837, Charles Dickens took his young wife and infant son to Doughty Street and established his first matrimonial home; so did I, and the wife that I took there then is with me to-night; and, when he lived in Doughty Street, Charles Dickens was a student at the Middle Temple; so was I. To the lasting regret of the Benchers, he was never called, but we value and are proud of his association with us, in spite of the fact that he referred to the Benchers of his day as being 'blue-nosed and too much given to the consideration of vintage port.' I pay my rent as regularly as I can in Putney, whose ancient bridge and church are upon the cover of the original monthly numbers of *Pickwick Papers*. I have practised before Henry Fielding Dickens, Charles Dickens's son, and I have had as my most courteous opponent, Henry Dickens; but these are small and irrelevant matters to which you have most graciously permitted me to refer, and I must to the task I have been allotted and I frankly confess that I feel like Sergeant Buzfuz, when he opened up the case of Bardell and Pickwick by addressing the Jury, and you know what he said: 'Never, in the whole course of my professional experience, never, from the very first moment of applying myself to the study and practice of the law, have I approached a case with feelings of such

deep emotion, or with such a heavy sense of the responsibility imposed upon m.e' But, as he told the Jurors he knew, so do I know that I am addressing ' a body of high-minded and intelligent persons, whom I now see before me.'

" Many men here present, but no lady, can remember the year 1902. It was the end of the Victorian era and another one was starting. The South African War was coming to an end. It was the year of the Khaki Election. Arthur Balfour was Prime Minister and Joseph Chamberlain was considering Tariff Reform. The world was about to enjoy—if that is the right word –the motor-car, aerial flight, the wireless. The ' movies ' were flickering in, Income Tax was 1 3d. in the pound, and the people of the nation—always a little fussy about matters like that—protested so much, that it was reduced the next year to 11d.

" Such were the times in 1902 and the state of the country, when B. W. Matz, lover of Dickens and an authority upon Dickens's work and life, with the assistance of a few enthusiasts, founded this Fellowship to knit together in the bond of fellowship all lovers of the great man, to spread the principles of humanity and to assist in the preservation of buildings and objects associated with his name and his work. Who am I who should attempt to tell you of the achievements of that Fellowship during its first fifty years? I have no qualifications for that, except that I happen to be its youngest member. The things that it has done—and so much of it owing to the far-seeing character of B. W. Matz, who saw to it that it was well and truly founded, and the building lasts according to the solidity of its foundations. And Matz founded *The Dickensian*, that wonderful little quarterly, which provides a forum for the discussions of the learned and an interest for those who are not quite so learned. And the greatest achievement was the acquisition of 48 Doughty Street, largely due to the efforts of B. W. Matz, who survived its acquisition only a short while. One of the great things about the Fellowship is that it had such an individual as B. W. Matz to guide it through its first quarter of a century, and this company, I know, will welcome the presence at this dinner of daughters of B. W. Matz.

" I need not tell you, who know it so well, the joy of visiting 48 Doughty Street. Its well-arranged rooms, its pictures, its portraits, its collection of relics and its library, have caused my Scottish friends to say it is the best shillingsworth in London. I wonder, if Dickens revisited us, what he would think of 48 Doughty Street. He desired to be remembered by his publications. He *is*, the world over. And now he belongs to the ages, and it does seem to me that the ages are entitled to preserve as much as they can of everything associated with his life and his work. Unfortunately, many relics have found a resting place in other lands; but I recommend a visit to the Dickens House in Doughty Street, which will demonstrate that the Fellowship has been successful in making a wonderful collection to put into that most fascinating museum.

" If Dickens had been born one hundred years after his time, the year 1952 would have found him famous in every English-speaking country. But what a dollar earner he would have been !

And how the Inland Revenue would have rubbed their hands! I think he would have had a great deal to say, because coming here in 1952, famous as he would have been, he would have found that, if he sold a house at a profit, it was capital in more senses than one, but if he sold his copyright, he would have found, as he produced one world's best-seller after another, that each one meant a financial crisis. He would have found that it was probably better to give the film rights away, and he would have found that, instead of writing for posterity, it would be much better to write for the Pools.

"We shall not all be here when the Dickens Fellowship celebrates its centenary, but when it does, 132 years will have passed since Charles Dickens was buried in Westminster Abbey. When that time comes, I venture to say—and I am sure that you will support me—that Dickens will still be read. He will be read—let us put it as simply as we can—because he was a great writer who could make his readers laugh and cry. He will be read for his wonderful description of the life of a generation which has long since passed, and he will be honoured as one of the great outstanding names of the Victorian era."

Sir Hugh Casson, supporting the toast, said: "Many years ago, an article appeared in one of those advanced magazines, referring to Charles Dickens as a revolutionary, and it proved satisfactorily to me that Charles Dickens *was* a revolutionary. If that is true, as I think it is, that makes you all members of a Society of Revolutionaries. Now, revolutionaries are suspect in many places in the world to-day, but I am all for revolutionaries. I have always been one of those people who agree very strongly with the American Judge who said that the danger was not from a revolutionary, not from a reformer, but from a non-reformer, a man who takes his ideas and opinions—as he buys his socks and shirts—out of stock drawers and stock sizes. I believe that to be true and that is why I hope you do not mind being called revolutionaries. Not forgetting, of course, the fact that there is no person perhaps more conventional and more conforming than a certain sort of revolutionary—people who, having one single object in mind, when it is attained, cannot conceive any idea of the possibility of change. There are revolutionaries *and* revolutionaries. You I should class as '*and* revolutionaries'—people who believe in improvements, not by the violent overthrow of human institutions, but by the gradual improvement in human nature, and that, I think, is the sort of revolutionary that Charles Dickens was. His target, surely, was not the social system so much as human beings.

"I have called you revolutionaries and I am also going to call you artists—and I think you are, for this reason. I refer to a remark made by E. M. Forster in the very darkest days of the war, about artists in general. He said that a great work of art was created in an atmosphere of excitement, that that excitement hangs about that work of art and makes minor artists of all those who catch its power. You have all, in your day and in your time, caught the power of Charles Dickens. That makes you artists, as well as revolutionaries."

Sir Compton Mackenzie, replying for the Dickens Fellowship, said: "Some twenty years ago, I was prosecuted, by almost everybody who could prosecute, under the Official Secrets Act, and a State trial, more or less, was staged. We had three preliminary appearances at the Guildhall, where I sat in front of Aldermen who looked rather like Alderman Fitzwarren. Finally, for a fourth hearing, it was necessary to go to another court of the Guildhall. It was held in a court with a curious air of antiquity. The Clerk of the Court said: 'I rather think, Mr. Mackenzie, it will interest you to know that the Court in which your case is being heard this morning was used by the great novelist, Charles Dickens, as a model for the famous case of Bardell and Pickwick; and I must be forgiven any suggested contempt of court when I say that this is about the most ridiculous case that has been heard in it since.' It really is rather a triumph to have been tried in a ridiculous case. The whole present vanished away; there I was back in the past. Sergeant Buzfuz got up—then the dream vanished.

"I think you will allow, in view of that, that I may fairly represent you to-night, because, after all, I am replying for a great wave of humanity, right over the whole world. And I may say to our American visitors to-night, I have a special emotional right to reply to this toast, because I am half American—my mother was American—so I am speaking for both the United States and for this country.

"Fifty years have gone by—1902 to 1952—and you sit here to-night; the evening will pass—vanish away; yet something will remain, some warmth of Charles Dickens himself, that great creator of life. That, after all, is what matters—the major novelist's ability to create life. Who would deny that?

"I have been privileged for several years to be President of this great Fellowship. You go round, in the provinces, and here, but you go round and know everybody with whom you are shaking hands; you are shaking hands with a friend, somebody whom you know quite well, for you have both enjoyed and both drunk from the same spring of life as that great artist. What parallel is there? Only one other near parallel, in my own country of Scotland, over Burns. The same sense of loyalty, over a man who has expressed the very life of a nation, is there over Burns. And when we have our Burns Suppers—how many times I have proposed the Immortal Memory I should be sorry to say—I always think of Dickens at the same time, because they are two parallels.

"We have heard a great deal of the life of Charles Dickens during the last twenty-five years. I once alluded to the habit of to-day of trying to lower the man who really created life for us, like Dickens. It is really jealousy. We must try to reduce him to our size. It is very easy to find this or that to object to, to make your picture of the man—to think you have reduced him. You have not reduced him at all. Shakespeare cannot be dealt with, because now we do not believe he existed at all. We know, with the help of our industrious biographers, that Charles Dickens lived, and it will be at least 200 years before people will prove he

never existed at all. In the meantime, we know he was a living, human being.

"In 1851, he produced a play Lytton had written. My grandmother played the principal part; Queen Victoria was there; it was a grand evening at Devonshire House. Seventy years later, Devonshire House was to be swept away. The play was revived. My sister Fay played our grandmother's part then. Neville Lytton and other descendants of the original players, including Dickens, were there, and we all danced the last quadrille. It was just on midnight—a kind of symbolical dance at the end. Silence fell; the house-breakers began to knock down Devonshire House. That was the end of a whole age; that moment, something passed out. I think that was a great moment.

"When I look back on my grandmother talking of Mr. Dickens and Mr. Thackeray, it takes me right back into it; and now, listening to me, *you* become part of all that.

"Here are you all; another fifty years will come and go. I hope there is somebody here young enough to remember this evening then. To carry it on: that is the great thing. You come here from all over the country, from over the sea, to celebrate a great creator, a great gift to the country, an immense heritage. Here you are celebrating it. I have tried to express what all of you would have wished to say—a sense of awe at being here at all and a hope of carrying with us, on and on, the memory of this evening."

Mr. Livingston Stebbins, Vice-President of the Boston (Mass.), Branch, also replied to the toast: "Speaking for the Fellowship overseas, let me say that you who represent Great Britain and her Commonwealth could scarcely be closer to us in spirit than we from America feel that you truly are. For we are still kindred, through a common ancestry with a common law—for your early law is the basis of our American law—without the need of translation from a foreign tongue, because your language is our language, your ideals of justice are our ideals of justice, your government of free men is reflected in our government, and we are proud of our inheritance of freedom. In the course of tragic events, that freedom is in great jeopardy in the world of to-day, and is not the hope of its preservation primarily dependent upon the English-speaking nations. How imperative it is that we remain united, as never before, in the bond of common fellowship, so that, in the end, all men at last may be free. And if there is hardly a stronger bond of unity than language, how happy are we that we can share with you the works of your great authors! And how different we should all be, if there were no Charles Dickens to draw us together to-night. His characters, if they came trooping into this room, would be recognised, every one, as old friends and neighbours. So true to life in their clothing of fiction that they inhabit the real world of our daily lives and the shadowy regions of our imagination. And even as their vanities and foibles, and weakness and nobility humanise them and make them more lovable, so let it be that our own shortcomings, both yours and ours, humanise and make us truly kindred in spirit, and unite us in an international bond of friendship that shall never be broken.

" May I recall to you the familiar words of the toast given by Dickens at the Boston Dinner in his honour in February 1842: ' America and England; may there never be any division but the Atlantic between them.' That sentiment, I need hardly say, is now, as it was then, fully reciprocated by us Americans.

" And so, finally, on behalf of our Fellowship overseas, I express the sentiment that Great Britain and her Commonwealth of Nations and the United States ever remain steadfast friends for the sake of all mankind and the preservation of the peace of the world."

Mr. Leslie C. Staples proposed the Toast of " The Chairman," and emphasised not only the Fellowship's debt to Sir Gerald for his conduct of the Chair that evening, but for the enthusiasm with which he had thrown himself into the Jubilee plans as a whole, which owe so much to him. Mr. Staples also expressed the Fellowship's pleasure in the presence at the dinner of Mr. R. J. Cruikshank, who, with his staff on the *News Chronicle*, had done, and were doing, so much for the Fellowship during these celebrations. Sir Gerald's reply brought the evening to a conclusion.

Guests at the Dinner each received an illustrated souvenir menu, the theme of which was the Fellowship's fifty years' history.

The Editor most gratefully acknowledges the great assistance of Miss M. E. Brown in the preparation of this report of the speeches.

JUBILEE TOUR OF DICKENSLAND

AMONG the many novel features of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations was a six-day Tour of Dickensland by motor-coach. Nothing of the kind had been previously attempted by the Fellowship, and it was crowned by complete success. The company consisted of thirty-eight members, of whom nineteen were from the United States and one from Australia.

Leaving the Dickens House on the morning following the Jubilee Banquet, the first halt was made at Hatfield, where the party was greeted by the Hon. Secretary of the local Branch. They walked to the Eight Bells tavern, visited by Bill Sikes on a memorable occasion, and to the churchyard wherein Mrs. Lirriper interred her husband. After lunch at Kettering, the afternoon was spent at Rockingham Castle, the " Chesney Wold " of *Bleak House*. Here the visitors were received by Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, the great-grandson of the Hon. Richard and Mrs. Watson, Dickens's hosts there on many occasions. Tea followed at Market Harborough and the evening found the travellers being received at Birmingham by a party of the members of that Branch, who later led the way on a tour of places in the city associated with Dickens.

The second day began with a visit to Tong, which was described by Dickens as the resting place of Little Nell, after her wanderings. The Rev. E. J. Gargery received the party and conducted it over his magnificent church. They lunched at the Hop Pole, at

Tewkesbury, as did Mr. Pickwick, and a short time was found in which to visit the Abbey. A halt was also made at Gloucester where the President and some members of the Gloucester Branch received the visitors and the Dean gave them a delightful half-hour in the Cathedral. Bath was reached in the late afternoon, and visits were paid to the Pump Room and the Roman Baths, to the Abbey, and after dinner a complete tour of Dickensian Bath gave the party a very good idea of that beautiful city. The visit to the Crescent, the scene of Winkle's nocturnal adventure, under a starlit sky and the lights of the town twinkling everywhere beneath, was a particularly happy episode.

The third day included Salisbury, with its *Chuzzlewit* memories; Amesbury, the reputed home of Pecksniff; Stonehenge; a drive through the New Forest; and so to the Dickens Birthplace at Portsmouth. Here the local Branch was represented by a reception committee and after an inspection of the house, the journey was continued to H.M.S. *Victory*, which our American friends, particularly, found to be a fine climax to a fine day's run. That evening at their hotel at Southsea the travellers were welcomed by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Portsmouth, and a large number of officers and members of the Portsmouth Branch joined them at dinner.

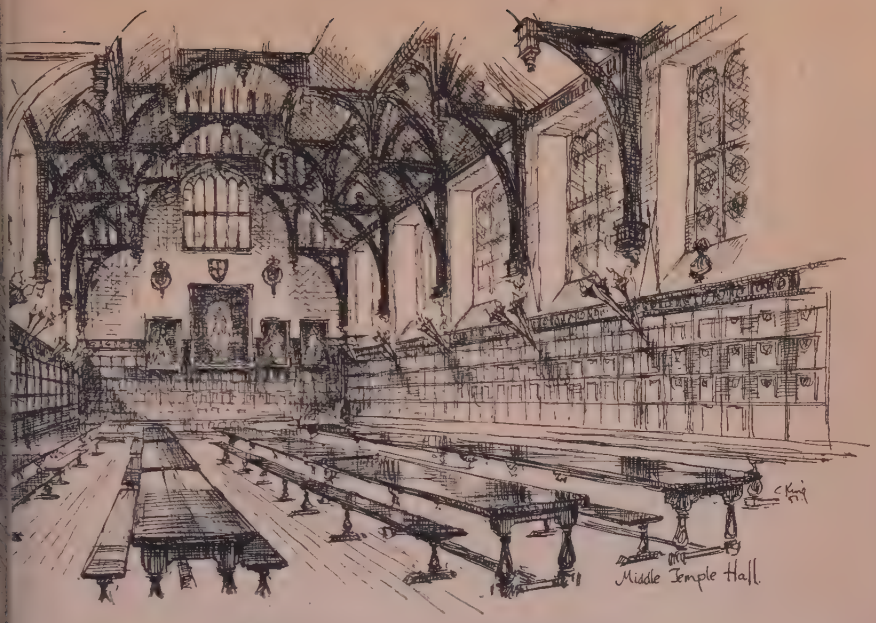
The fourth day's route led through Chichester, where a halt was made to visit the Cathedral, Brighton, where several places of Dickensian interest were pointed out, and on to Lewes for lunch. Tea came at Rye. An hour was spent in its quaint streets, and the party rested for the night at Cliftonville.

The fifth day began at Broadstairs with its many memories of Dickens. Miss Waterer received the party at Betsey Trotwood's cottage, and later the so-called "Bleak House," the "Fort House" of Dickens's stay, was specially opened for inspection. And so to Canterbury. After lunch the party toured the Cathedral under the guidance of Miss Margaret Babbington, and attended evensong. After tea, the many buildings of Dickensian and historic interest were visited.

The final day began with a full morning in Rochester, that Mecca of Dickensians. Lunch was served at the Bull, in the room where took place the Ball described in *Pickwick*. The afternoon began with a visit to the gardens of Gads Hill Place, by kind permission of Miss Stewart Burt, continued with another to Dickens's chalet in Cobham Park, and so to the Leather Bottle, Tupman's retreat, for tea. After visiting the church and college, the route led down on to Pip's marshes. The church at Lower Higham, "the church on the marshes," came first, and then on to see the "lozenge" tombstones at Cooling. The final halt was at Chalk, where Dickens's real and supposed honeymoon-cottages and Gargery's forge were seen.

In London the party dined together before separating, and presentations were made to the leaders, Mr. J. Greaves and Mr. Leslie C. Staples, with many expressions of the travellers' appreciation and enjoyment.

The tour was the subject of a typically delightful "Fourth Leader," in *The Times* of September 16th.



BARDELL *v.* PICKWICK
AN APPEAL

ON the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its foundation the Dickens Fellowship gathered in strength in the historic and now magnificently restored Middle Temple Hall, for the hearing of an Appeal in the *cause célèbre* of Bardell *v.* Pickwick. Under the superb roof that probably heard the voice of Shakespeare speaking one of his own parts before Queen Elizabeth I, and saw the young Charles Dickens eat his dinners as a student, the Hon. Mr. Justice Slade sat to hear an appeal from the verdict granted at Guildhall on February 14th, 1828, to Martha Bardell for breach of promise of marriage against Samuel Pickwick.

The case occasioned considerable interest and nearly four hundred people were "in court." They were received by the President, Sir Gerald Barry, and excitement ran high as Mr. Justice Slade took his seat, by candle-light, at the famous *Golden Hind* table. At a table on his right sat Sir Arthur Comyns Carr, Q.C., and Mr. George Edinger, for the appellant, and at another on his left, Mr. J. E. S. Simon, Q.C., M.P., and Lord Dunboyne, for the defendant.

The proceedings opened with an application by Sir Arthur to extend the time for the appeal. Mr. Simon, opposing this, said that to make such an application 120 years out of time was effrontery, using the word in its Pickwickian sense, but Mr. Justice Slade granted the application. But he refused an application that Mr. Pickwick be called as a witness, principally on the ground that it was supported by leading counsel on both sides, which was in itself, he said, suspicious.

Counsel for the appellant then submitted a letter written after the trial by Mrs. Bardell, in which she admitted that she had received no offer of marriage but that her action was a conspiracy inspired by Dodson and Fogg, her legal advisers. The judge admitted this provided that a signed affidavit could be produced that it was in Mrs. Bardell's hand.

Sir Arthur proceeded to make a brilliant speech for the unfortunate Mr. Pickwick, whom he described as a kindly man dogged by misfortune and who, because of this case, had suffered hardships in the Fleet Prison such as might draw tears even from the eyes of Brother Buzfuz—than which no greater miracle had taken place since Moses drew water from the stone. Dealing with the two letters put in as evidence at the trial, counsel asked where was there any support for the alleged promise of marriage in that referring to " chops and tomata sauce "? " Chops, especially in the plural, bring to our frustrated minds in this year of 1952, associations of nostalgia but not of tenderness." The second letter, referring to Mr. Pickwick being delayed by a slow coach, was dismissed with equal contempt: " It may not have been apparent, m'lud, before the days of British Railways, that one coach could be slower than the next."

In short, the trial before Mr. Justice Stareleigh was a travesty of justice. The Judge slept during the proceedings and in summing-up, used only those of his notes that he found decipherable.

Mr. Simon, for Mrs. Bardell, submitted that Sir Arthur had attempted to throw dust in the eyes of the Judge. There was ample evidence that Mr. Pickwick was " fond of the ladies," recalling his adventure at Ipswich. That, he said, " was not so much a case of whose bedroom was whose, but whose fiancée was whose, an exact parallel to his mistake in this case. It had been suggested," continued counsel, " that Mrs. Bardell had not in fact, given any answer to a proposal of marriage. But surely anyone with any knowledge of the world knows that such a proposal need not be answered by a female with the word ' Yes,' It could be answered by a smile, a nod, or even the word ' No '."

Lord Dunboyne, junior counsel for Mrs. Bardell, submitted that His Lordship had no jurisdiction to hear the appeal, since the law required that three judges must sit together in the Court of Appeal. Furthermore, by allowing this appeal His Lordship would " open the floodgates to a long list of applicants, perhaps beginning with Mary, Queen of Scots." In his submission the plaintiff Pickwick and his witnesses should be presumed dead.

Mr. Justice Slade delivering judgement, said that there should be a new trial, to be held in ten years' time, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Dickens Fellowship, on the grounds that his distinguished predecessor was asleep during much of the original hearing, that a mass of inadmissible evidence was allowed, that witnesses were prompted by leading questions and because of the alleged new evidence.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Mr. Henry Charles Dickens, Life President, expressed the gratitude of the Fellowship to the Master Benchers of the Middle Temple, for permitting the hearing to be held in their historic and beautiful Hall, and Earl Jowitt,

the former Lord Chancellor, spoke in praise and in gratitude of Mr. Justice Slade and of counsel.

The Fellowship, in addition, is indebted to Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh for the share that was his in the organisation of this unique event. That it was successful was amply demonstrated by the laughter that greeted the thrust and sally of opposing counsel, undisturbed by the court ushers, who were conspicuous by their absence. The brilliant evening concluded with the cutting of the Jubilee cake by Miss Winifred Matz, daughter of the founder, and the Fellowship was toasted in bowls of hot punch.

The Editor desires especially to thank Mr. C. King, Bucks Mills, N. Devon, for the generous loan of his beautiful drawing of Middle Temple Hall.

EMLYN WILLIAMS'S NEW PROGRAMME

BLEAK HOUSE

In presenting a programme derived entirely from one book, Emlyn Williams set himself a greatly more difficult task than that presented by his earlier programme. Although the construction of *Bleak House* is now frequently excluded from the censure so often meted out to Dickens's plots, it remains true that the novelist's real passport to fame is provided by the rich feast of characterisation. Rich indeed it remains in Mr. Williams's hands.

The famous opening in the London fog provides an incomparable prologue to the feast, but it is to the extraordinary procession of great characters, each drawn with the precision of a miniaturist, that the memory returns again and again. What a "glorious host" they are, "to keep us company." The Jellybys, the Snagsbys, the Chadbands, the Bayham Badgers, the Turveydrops: each comes alive in turn as we are held, as in a vice, by that mobile face, the protean voice, and the strictly controlled gesture. Flite, Tulkinghorn, Krook, Skimpole, Pardiggle, take the stage and pass on. It is a Herculean feat, but it would be idle to pretend that the first performances showed Mr. Williams at the top of his form. On the first night in London, we were certainly carried away by sheer excitement, but the artistry of the presentation was greatly enhanced when we saw the performance again in its final week. There was a sweep about it then, that conquered a suspicion that an auditor unacquainted with the book would find the story difficult to follow, in spite of the skilful arrangement and compression. The characters were assumed with such ease that the "reader" seemed to be paying far more attention to telling the story than was apparent in the earlier performances. Quite breathless was the manner in which one was carried along in the third section, through the scenes of the death of Krook to the climax of the murder of Tulkinghorn. Can Emlyn Williams surpass this? May we be there to see him try!

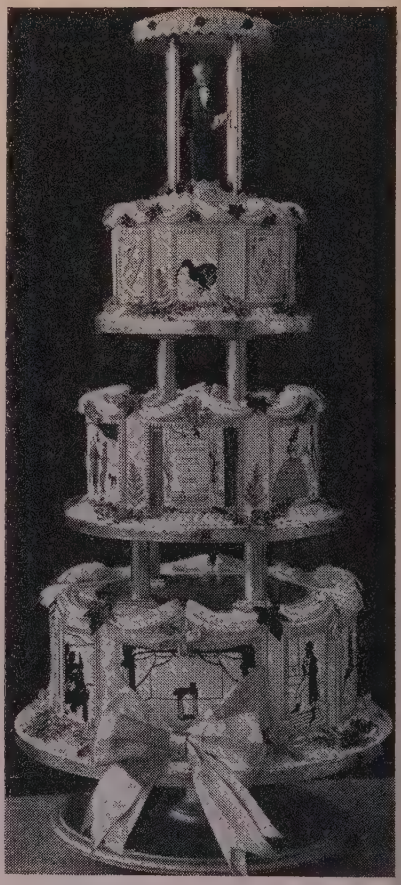
This second Dickens programme was given at the Festivals at Edinburgh and King's Lynn, and then in Wales as a prelude to the opening at the Ambassadors Theatre, London, on September 3rd, where it drew crowded houses for nine weeks before embarking on provincial and American tours. L.C.S.

"A GLITTERING TEMPLE OF CONFECTIONERY"

A PARTICULARLY noteworthy feature of the Jubilee Celebrations, and one that produced the greatest interest among the members attending them, was the Jubilee Cake, of which we reproduce a photograph, and of which a full account should be put on record.

The cake was planned and designed by Miss D. L. Minards. The drawings were made by Mrs. Gwen Major, and the decorating and the icing was carried out by Mr. Frank Jacobs, of Cadby Hall, who was responsible for the Wedding Cake of H.M. the Queen, and the Twenty-first Birthday Cake of H.R.H. the Princess Margaret. The ingredients were presented by members in various parts of the world, all the dried fruit being given by the Branch at Christchurch, New Zealand.

The whole was surmounted by the figure, in sugar, of Dickens, as he appeared at his public Readings. This stood under a canopy in emulation of the cake that graced the dinner held in celebration of the completion of the *Pickwick Papers*, which was described as "a glittering temple of confectionery, beneath the canopy of which stood the illustrious figure of Mr. Pickwick."



News Chronicle photograph

The top tier was decorated with ivy leaves and scarlet geraniums—both closely associated with Dickens, and used as badges by the Fellowship—and bore the emblems of nations, outside the United Kingdom, where branches of the Fellowship may be found: the Kangaroo of Australia, the Kiwi of New Zealand, the Maple Leaf of Canada, and the Stars and Stripes of the United States.

The second tier depicted various activities of the Fellowship: *The Dickensian*, of which a copy of the first issue was reproduced, a figure of Tiny Tim, and blinded servicemen typified the charitable schemes carried out over the years, a Victorian belle

and her beau represented the establishment of the Costume Department, and a carol party suggested the spirit which inspires our meetings at Yuletide.

The third tier bore similar symbolic panels: a stage-coach that recalled the coach ride to Rochester which marked the Pickwick Centenary, a figure of the fat boy regarding the Skylon and the Dome of Discovery, stood for the Dickens Dinner at the South Bank Exhibition of the Festival of Britain, a theatre proscenium framing Dickens's Reading Desk, typified many dramatic productions and readings from Dickens given by Sir Henry F. Dickens, Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh, and by Emlyn Williams.

At the base stood a portrait of B. W. Matz, the founder, and a reproduction of the Dickens House in sugar.

This memorable example of the Confectioner's art stood at the foot of the Grand Staircase at Ashridge when the Pageant of the History of the Fellowship was staged. It then adorned the Hall of the Middle Temple on October 6th, when the Fellowship marked the 50th anniversary of its foundation. After the hearing of the Appeal in Bardell *v.* Pickwick, as reported on another page, it was cut by Winifred Matz and the Toast of the Fellowship honoured in punch.

DICKENS AND THE STAGE

When it is borne in mind that Dickens was inordinately interested in the stage, and the stage and its modern derivatives have paid unremitting attention to his work, it is surprising that no more than four books exclusively dealing with the subject have been published. The best of these is S. J. Adair Fitzgerald's *Dickens and the Drama*, and that appeared forty years ago. In good time, it will be replaced by the exhaustive work of Mr. Malcolm Morley which is now being presented serially in *The Dickensian*. In the meantime, there now appears *Dickens the Dramatist*, by F. Dubrez Fawcett, W. H. Allen, 21s.

The scope of this work is so wide that the subject is only skimmed. The principal section, that devoted to the dramatic adaptations of the novels, occupies 90 pages out of the book's total of 265. The Dickens student who is armed with Adair Fitzgerald's book and Malcolm Morley's articles would therefore stand in no need of the new book on that aspect of the matter, even if its information was accurate, which, often it is not.

The chapters on Dickens as dramatist, actor-manager, and "reader," do not appear to have anything new to tell, and those devoted to screen and radio are of necessity so short as to be barely more than an introduction to their subjects. But there is an excellent description of a section of a Dickens "serial" going out "on the air." There is a chapter on amateur productions which, interesting as it is to those concerned, deals, after describing some of the more notable productions, only with the fringe of the subject.

N.V.V.

Royal Matinee

EMLYN WILLIAMS APPEARS AS CHARLES DICKENS

for the benefit of the

Dickens House Endowment Fund

(in the presence of H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother)

THEATRE ROYAL, Drury Lane, " the Lane," as it is affectionately known to Londoners, came into its own again for the afternoon of October 30th. This beautiful playhouse, whose history is longer than that of any other in the world and synonymous with that of English Dramatic Literature, was the scene of the concluding function of the Dickens Fellowship's Golden Jubilee.

Although not now as he knew it, there are extensive remains of the theatre Dickens frequented. He was familiar with it, both " in front," and " behind," especially when his friend Macready was in command, and on one occasion at least, he spoke from its stage. What more appropriate setting could be found for the celebrations of a Fellowship founded in a name, in letters, second only to Shakespeare's.

For this performance Mr. Emlyn Williams generously repeated, on the only occasion in London this year, his original programme of Readings from Dickens. Given in aid of the Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial), the performance was sponsored by the *News Chronicle*. The great house was filled to overflowing with an audience representive of every phase of national life from ambassadors to just ordinary Dickens lovers. The Fellowship was represented, among others, by members from Australia, from Manchester, Nottingham, Portsmouth, and other branches, by Mr. A. W. Edwards, Hon. Secretary 1925-37, Miss W. Matz, and Mrs. Walter Dexter.

Above all, the occasion was graced by the presence of H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. It was her first visit to a theatre since the death of King George VI. Her Majesty was received at the royal entrance, by Mr. Henry Charles Dickens, Life President of the Fellowship, the Marchioness of Crewe, Chairman of the Matinee Committee, and Mr. L. J. Cadbury, Chairman of the *News Chronicle*. In the royal ante room, Mrs. H. C. Dickens, and members of the Matinee Committee, were presented, and Caroline Danby, a three-and-a-half-year-old great-great-grand-daughter of Dickens, presented a Victorian bouquet to Her Majesty, who then entered the royal box and the great audience rose to receive her. After the playing of the National Anthem, the curtains swung apart and the now familiar figure of Emlyn Williams, in the guise of Charles Dickens, took his place at the Reading Desk and began: " Chicksey, Veneering, and Stobbles . . ."

In the first interval, Sir Gerald Barry, President, the three officers of the Fellowship, and Miss D. L. Minards, Asst. Secretary, were received in the royal ante room, presented by Mr. H. C.

Dickens. Her Majesty engaged the party in conversation for some minutes, and evinced the greatest interest in the Dickens House and the Fellowship, and graciously accepted a specially bound copy of the Illustrated Souvenir-Guide to the Dickens House. Mr. and Mrs. Emlyn Williams were received in the second interval.

Mr. Williams can seldom have had a more appreciative audience. It followed him with the closest attention throughout. The humours of Podsnap at the Veneering's reception were followed by the beautifully spoken death of Paul Dombey. Then came Bob Sawyer's hilarious party in Lant Street, the eerie story of *The Signalman*, the quaint oddities of *Mr. Chops*, leading to the superb climax of "The Fancy Ball," from *A Tale of Two Cities*.

After the second interval, Mr. Williams's replica of the famous Reading Desk was replaced on the stage by the original, brought from the Dickens House and used for the two final readings. Mr. Williams was accorded a great ovation at the conclusion. Having made his now traditional bow to the Desk with its pile of books, he had to take call after call.

Her Majesty remained to the end and repeatedly acknowledged the affectionate demonstration of the audience before she left.

The Performance was provided with a beautiful Souvenir Programme, printed in fine nineteenth century type. Including a photograph of the portrait of the Queen Mother by Dennis Fildes, an impression of Emlyn Williams as Dickens, by Ronald Searle, reproductions of illustrations from *The Humour of Dickens*, and articles by R. J. Cruikshank, Emlyn Williams, and the Editor of *The Dickensian*, it was produced by the *News Chronicle*.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

THE MACLISE PORTRAIT

SIR,

May I be permitted to call the attention of members of the Dickens Fellowship to the beautifully executed copy in oils of the Maclise portrait of Dickens, presented to the Dickens House by Mr. Leslie C. Staples, in commemoration of the Golden Jubilee. This very fine work by Marjorie Rodgers (Mrs. D. Wray) is especially welcome as it depicts the novelist as he appeared at the time of his residence in Doughty Street. Kindly permit me to express the thanks of all Dickens lovers to our Hon. Editor for his generous and appropriate Jubilee gift. Thank you, Mr. Editor!

Yours sincerely,

J. GREAVES,

Hon. Secretary to
The Dickens Fellowship and the
Trustees of the Dickens House.

HOW IT STARTED

By Emlyn Williams

Reprinted from the Programme of the Royal Matinee, Drury Lane, October 30th.

I AM often asked how the idea of these Dickens performances came to me. The first tiny seed sprouted in May, 1942, when I was asked to choose four minutes from my favourite book for a B.B.C. programme called " And So To Bed." Without hesitation, I picked the murder scene from *Bleak House*; and on the evening, as I spoke into that iron-faced microphone, the words—even in that grey little studio, as impersonal as a padded cell—seemed to take on a throbbing life of their own. " He walks on, in the shadow of the lofty houses, many of whose mysteries are treasured up within his old black satin waistcoat; yet there is not a voice in a mile of them to whisper ' Don't go home ! ' " . . . I don't know whether listeners sat back and lived again their excitement when their eyes had first lighted upon that passage, but I certainly did. " Those words, deserve an audience," I thought with a sigh of regret, as I closed the book with a dull thud that echoed even more dully through my padded cell.

I remember equally well the next small stages. A day when I read the same passage to my young sons—in response to a challenge that all school books were dull to read in the holidays—and convinced them to the contrary. Then several years later, in February, 1950, in New York, I remember a four-minute television appearance, acting the same passage—yes, acting this time, not reading—I learnt it by heart, and played it as if in the theatre. Once again, I felt so excited by the sound of the words as they sprang to such palpable theatrical life under the lights and shadows between me and the camera, that I hardly took in the later news that (through a slight technical hitch) the programme had not been seen by anybody !

The next stage was a very decisive one for me, for it was (no less) the stage of Drury Lane Theatre ! On the evening of Sunday, February 7th, 1951, at the annual " Merely-Players " all-star performance, I first appeared, for eight minutes, as Charles Dickens. And it gives me a sentimental feeling to be again in this theatre, on this afternoon in October, 1952, how could it not ? Especially as I am now playing, at the Ambassador's Theatre, in a full-length adaptation of *Bleak House* which finishes with the identical passage which I presented at that Drury Lane performance ! I stood in the wings waiting to go on surrounded by the maelstrom which seethes round the stage of every grand-scale charity performance—ballet dancers testing their muscles, Shakespearean courtiers conning their lines, musical comedy singers sipping glasses of water, and what seemed a hundred stage hands heaving at drunken chandeliers and sprawling Corinthian pillars. And in the middle of it all, looking as if it might be swept away any minute in the maelstrom, Dickens's own desk, which the Dickens House had brought out from under its glass case and lent to me for this performance—a little rashly, I felt, as I watched the crowds swirling around something which they (understandably) took for an old " prop " and which I knew

to be an item of historic value. The people from the Dickens House were in the audience, and I was glad they could not see their property at that moment!

There was no room in the programme to explain to the audience about Dickens's Readings and their phenomenal character, so I had asked Wynford Vaughan-Thomas to introduce the "turn" (which I virtually was!) and to quote a paragraph from the Una Pope-Hennessy biography about the Readings. He quickly gave the audience the picture of the period, mentioning (in so many words) that on the 27th December, 1853, when Dickens was at the height of his fame, as a novelist, he ventured on something quite new: a public reading, in Birmingham, of *A Christmas Carol* which turned out to be an historic occasion. Vaughan-Thomas added that it opened up, for Dickens, an extraordinary second career, spread over seventeen years, for the "Readings; became each more sensationally successful than the last" and (most important) he explained that the word "Reading" is virtually a misnomer, for while Dickens had the book before him, he never consulted it once and gave throughout an uninhibited dramatic performance.

Dickens's Reading Desk
now at the Dickens House.

I had no time to feel nervous, at least not about myself; for while all this was being told the audience, I was watching two eager stage hands behind the curtain hoisting the Desk on to a platform. It looked as if the carafe of water on the desk was to pitch overboard any minute—so is it any wonder my eyes were fixed on the desk? But there was no accident; the curtains parted, the desk was revealed to an audience which did not know quite what to expect, and I walked on, to a roll of drums—yes, that *did* make me nervous! holding under my arm the book on which all my hopes were built.

I spoke my first words: "Mr. Tulkinghorn was standing in the window, closing up her view of the dying day" . . . As soon as I

had read them, put down my book, and looked round the darkened audience, I knew that the magic of Dickens had got them. Dickens was obsessed by the theatre, but it is obvious to us now that the few plays he wrote had to conform to the meagre and naive dramatic taste of his day—in other words, he was too good for the Victorian theatre, and knew instinctively that he would have to pour his natural dramatic gifts between the covers of a book. But those written words are meant for the theatre, too, as he proved to me that night.

Another thing which having an audience proved to me, was that there was something very right about appearing *as Dickens* —no, more than right, inevitable. I have always been a straight actor, in plays, and have never once appeared on my own—not even to give a lecture, the idea of which imbues me with stage-fright! So to get up as myself and "show off" (as it were) for over two hours, would be for me merely an embarrassing experience. But I found, that night, that it is actually *easier* for me to do something which people have told me would seem to them doubly difficult—to project parts *through* the personality of Dickens. In other words, I suppose, I—as a straight actor—am at home giving a straight performance of a character who is giving a variety of performances, whereas I would not be at all at home giving that variety of performances as myself! I can cite at least one example of the same sort of thing—Alfred Lunt, in *Idiot's Delight*, played the part of a song-and-dance man, and actually performed a "routine" with half-a-dozen chorus girls. But I am willing to wager that Mr. Lunt would die rather than come on at the Palladium and to that identical act, himself!

The work of adapting—particularly, of course, with *Bleak House*—has been as arduous as the memorising and rehearsing. Dickens had to adapt his books a certain amount before he "read" from them; but naturally his audience was so familiar with the incidents and characters, that he was safe in assuming that anything not explained in any particular passage he was using, need *not* be explained, because the audience knew the rest of the book practically by heart. I have felt that, in this day and age, to follow the same procedure would not be fair to any audience, and have always adapted on the strict assumption that my audience knows nothing at all of the book in question, or has forgotten all it once knew. This has made the work of adaptation sometimes intensely difficult, but always (for that very reason) intensely fascinating. I felt that if, in the adaptation, I could make the performance acceptable to an audience strange to Dickens as well as to one familiar with him, then there was a chance of coaxing sceptics to lift down, from their shelves, a book which they had possibly thought of as a ponderous classic, and to turn its pages for the first time, with the feeling that they were about to explore a wonderful new world.

If that happens? If that happens, I shall be as happy as they . . .

SHAVINGS FROM DICKENS'S WORKSHOP

Unpublished Fragments from the Novels

II. DOMBEY AND SON

IN the following pages will be found those passages of *Dombey and Son* deleted by the author in making up the monthly serial parts in which the novel appeared. They are taken from Dickens's original corrected proofs, and published for the first time, by permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum. —EDITOR.

MR. DOMBEY

[Mr. Dombey's thoughts on the delay of Providence in granting him an heir. Ch. I.]

With the drawback of hope deferred. That hope deferred, which (as the Scripture very correctly tells us, Mr. Dombey would have added in a patronising way; for his highest distinct idea even of Scripture, if examined, would have been found to be, that as forming part of a general whole, of which Dombey and Son formed another part, it was therefore to be commended and upheld) maketh the heart sick.

MRS. CHICK

[Mr. Dombey's sister asks to be fortified with wine and cake after seeing his heir for the first time. Ch. I.]

Mr. Dombey promptly supplied her with these refreshments from a tray on the table.

"I shall not drink my love to you, Paul," said Louisa; "I shall drink [to] the little Dombey. Good Gracious!— it's the most astonishing thing I ever knew in all my days, he's such a perfect Dombey."

Quenching this expression of opinion in a short hysterical laugh which terminated in tears, Louisa cast up her eyes, and emptied her glass.

"I know it's very weak and silly of me," she replied, "to be so trembly and shaky from head to foot, and to allow my feelings so completely to get the better of me, but I cannot help it."

MRS. CHICK AGAIN

[Mrs. Chick on the same occasion recommends Miss Tox also to take some refreshment. Ch. I.]

Mr. Dombey of course officiated and also refilled his sister's glass which she (looking another way, and unconscious of his intentions) held straight and steady the while, and then regarded with great astonishment, saying, "My dear Paul, what have you been doing!"

On Mrs. Dombey's Health

[Mrs. Chick is annoyed when her brother informs her that the physicians express concern about his wife's condition. Ch. I.]

Do not allow yourself to receive a turn unnecessarily. Remember of what importance you are to society, and do not allow yourself to be worried by what is so very inconsiderately told you by people who ought to know better. Really, I'm surprised at 'em.

"I hope I know, Louisa," said Mr. Dombey, stiffly, "how to bear myself before the world."

"Nobody better, my dear Paul, Nobody half so well. They would be ignorant and base indeed who doubted it." "Ignorant and base indeed!" echoed Miss Tox, softly.

Mrs. Dombey

[Mr. Dombey told that there is no hope. Ch. I.]

"Can nothing be done?" asked Mr. Dombey.

The doctor shook his head, "We can do no more."

The windows stood open, and the twilight was gathering without. The scent of the restoratives that had been tried was pungent in the room, but had no fragrance in the dull and languid air the lady breathed.

Mr. Chick

[Mr. Chick's absent-mindedness in the house of mourning arouses his good lady's wrath. Ch. II.]

"Bow-wow-*wow*!" repeated Mrs. Chick with an emphasis of blighting contempt on the last syllable. "More like a professional singer with the hydrophobia, than a man in your station of life!"

The Chick Family

[Mr. Chick, to change the subject, had asked "How's the baby? "What baby do you mean?" demanded his wife— Ch. II.]

"The poor bereaved little baby," said Mr. Chick, "I don't know of any other."

"You don't know of any other," retorted Mrs. Chick, "more shame for you, I was going to say."

Mr. Chick looked astonished.

Paul

[Mrs. Chick disapproves of her brother's delay in selecting a suitable wet-nurse for his motherless child. Ch. II.]

, and in the meantime the poor child seems likely to be starved to death, Paul is so very particular—naturally so, of course, having set his whole heart on this one boy—and there are so many objections to everybody that offers, that I don't see, myself, the least chance of an arrangement.

Mr. Chick

[Mr. Chick having changed the conversation about a nurse for Paul by a reference to a teapot, Mrs. Chick— Ch. II.]

said she trusted he hadn't said it in aggravation, because that would do very little honour to his heart. She trusted he hadn't said it seriously, because that would do very little honour to his head. As in any case, he couldn't, however sanguine his disposition, hope to offer a remark that would be a greater outrage upon human nature in general, she would beg to leave the discussion at that point.

The Children of the Wet-nurse

[Mr. Dombey is dismayed by the thought that Polly's children might one day claim a sort of relationship to Paul. Ch. II.]

"Oh! but what relationship is there!" Louisa began—

"Is there!" echoed Mr. Dombey, who had not intended his sister to participate in the thought he had unconsciously expressed. "*Is* there, did you say, Louisa!"

"Can there be, I mean."

"Why none," said Mr. Dombey sternly. "The whole world knows that, I presume. Grief has not made me idiotic, Louisa."

Toodle's Profession

[Toodle explains to Mr. Dombey that he intends to seek employment on the newly constructed railroads "when they comes into full play." Ch. II.]

As he added in one of his hoarse whispers, "We mean to bring up little Biler to that line," Mr. Dombey enquired haughtily who little Biler was.

"The elder on 'em, Sir," said Toodle, with a smile, "it aint a common name. Sermuchser that when he was took to church the gen'm'n said it worn't a chrisen one, and he couldn't give it. But we always calls him Biler just the same. For we don't mean no harm. Not we."

"Do you mean to say, Man," enquired Mr. Dombey; looking at him with marked displeasure, "that you have called a child after a boiler?"

"No no, Sir," returned Toodle, with a tender consideration for his mistake. "I should hope not! No, Sir. After a Biler, Sir. The steam injin was a'most as good as a godfather to him, and so we called him Biler, don't you see!"

A shock to Mr. Dombey's Self-sufficiency

[Mr. Dombey, having dismissed his child's foster-father, turned the key in the door and paced the room. Ch. II.]

It would be harsh, and perhaps not altogether true, to say of him that he felt these rubs and gratings against his pride more keenly than he had felt his wife's death: but certainly they

impressed that event upon him with force and communicated to it weight and bitterness. It was a rude shock to his sense of property in his child, that these people—the mere dust of the earth, as he thought them—should be necessary to him, and it was natural that in proportion as he felt disturbed by it, he should deplore the occurrence which had made them so.

Some philosophers tell us that selfishness is the root of all but our best loves and affections. Mr. Dombey's infant child was from the beginning so distinctly important to him as being part of himself, or which was the same thing, of Dombey and Son, that there is no doubt his parental affection might have been easily traced, like many another superstructure of fair fame, to a very low foundation. But it is certain that there had begun to spring up in his habitually frigid breast, a current of anxieties and cares of which this infant was the source, that impelled the dominant springs of his character to a new action, and perhaps set one or two others in motion, that had never yet been at work.

Mr. Dombey's Fears

[Dombey had speculated on the possibility of Polly exchanging her son for Paul. If such an imposture were discovered years later, could it then be set right? Ch. II.]

But it was idle speculating thus. It couldn't happen. In a moment afterwards he determined it could, but that such women were constantly observed, and had no opportunity given them for the accomplishment of such a design even when they were so wicked as to entertain it. In another moment, he was remembering how few such cases seemed to have ever happened. In another moment he was wondering whether they ever happened and were not found out.

Polly is Inaugurated

[Wine is produced to celebrate the occasion— Ch. II.]

and Miss Tox, busying herself dispensing "tastes" to the young branches, bred them up to their father's business with such surprising expedition, that one made chokers of them in a matter of minutes.

Polly takes leave of her Family

[Polly embraced them all round in great distress, and— Ch. II.]

coming to her spouse at last, could not make up her mind to part with him, until he gently disengaged himself, at the close of the following allegorical piece of consolation:

"Polly, old 'ooman, whatever you do, my darling, hold up your head and fight low. Thats the only rule I know on, that'll carry any one through life. You always *have* held up your head and fought low, Polly. Do it now, or Bricks is no longer so, whether my wishes at this moment is to punch this family's head, or otherwise. Never mind. God bless you, Polly! Me and J'mima will do our duty by you; and with relating to yours, hold up your head and fight low, Polly, and you can't go wrong!"

Polly's Efforts on behalf of Florence

[When Dombey asked Polly if she had everything she required, the reply came so hesitatingly that he turned round again, enquiringly: Ch. III.]

"If you please, Sir, the child is very much disposed to take notice of things," said Richards, with another curtsey, "and—upstairs is a little dull for him, perhaps, Sir."

"I begged them to take you for airings constantly," said Mr. Dombey. "Very well! You shall go out oftener. You're quite right to mention it."

"I beg your pardon, Sir," faltered Polly, "but we do go out quite plenty, Sir, thank you."

"What would you have then?" asked Mr. Dombey.

"Indeed, Sir, I don't exactly know," said Polly, unless—

"Yes?"

The Aspirations of Miss Tox

[Mr. Dombey invites the Major to dine. He complimented Miss Tox highly beforehand, on her neighbour and acquaintance. Ch. X.]

"My dearest Louisa," said Miss Tox to Mrs. Chick, when they were alone together, on the morning of the appointed day, "if I should seem at all reserved to Major Bagstock, or under any constraint with him, promise me not to notice it."

"My dear Lucretia," returned Mrs. Chick, "what mystery is involved in this remarkable request? I must insist on knowing."

"Since you are resolved to extort a confession from me, Louisa," said Miss Tox instantly, "I have no alternative but to confide to you that the Major has been particular."

"Particular!" repeated Mrs. Chick.

"The Major has long been very particular indeed, my dear, in his attentions," said Miss Tox, "occasionally they have been so very marked, that my position has been one of no common difficulty."

"Is he in good circumstances?" enquired Mrs. Chick.

"I have every reason to believe, my dear—indeed I may say I *know*," returned Miss Tox, "that he is wealthy. He is truly military, and full of anecdote. I have been informed that his valor, when he was in active service, knew no bounds. I am told that he did all sorts of things in the Peninsular, with every description of fire-arm; and in the East and West Indies, my love, I really couldn't undertake to say what he did *not* do."

"Very creditable to him indeed," said Mrs. Chick, "extremely so, and you have given him no encouragement, my dear?"

"If I were to say, Louisa," replied Miss Tox, with every demonstration of making an effort that moved her soul, "that I never encouraged Major Bagstock slightly, I should not do justice to the friendship which exists between you and me. It is, perhaps, hardly in the nature of woman to receive such attentions as the Major once lavished upon myself without betraying some sense of

obligation. But that is past, long past. Between the Major and me there is now a yawning chasm, and I will not feign to give encouragement, Louisa, where I cannot give my heart. My affections," said Miss Tox, " but Louisa, this is madness ! " and departed from the room.

All this Mrs. Chick communicated to her brother before dinner; and it by no means indisposed Mr. Dombey to receive the Major with unwonted cordiality. The Major for his part was in a state of plethoric satisfaction that knew no bounds; and he coughed, and choked, and chuckled, and gasped, and swelled, until the waiters seemed positively afraid of him.

" Your family monopolises Joe's light, Sir," said the Major, when he had saluted Miss Tox. " Joe lives in darkness. Princess's Place is changed into Kamschatka in the winter time. There is no ray of sun, Sir, for Joey B. now."

" Miss Tox is good enough to take a great deal of interest in Paul, Major," returned Mr. Dombey—on behalf of that blushing virgin.

" Damme Sir," said the Major, " I'm jealous of my little friend. I'm pining away Sir. The Bagstock breed is degenerating in the forsaken person of old Joe." And the Major, becoming bluer and bluer, and puffing his cheeks further and further over the stiff ridge of his tight cravat, stared at Miss Tox, until his eyes seemed as if he were at that moment being overdone before the slow fire at the military college.

The Major is Pleased

[The Major had engineered a meeting with Mr. Dombey and the chapter was to have concluded thus: Ch. IX.]

That same evening the Major was diffuse at his club, on the subject of his friend Dombey in the city. " Damme Sir," said the Major, " he's a prince, is my friend Dombey in the city. I tell you what, Sir. If you had a few more men among you like old Joe Bagstock and my friend Dombey in the city, Sir, you'd do."

Expectations

[Mrs. Wickam warns Miss Berry that her aunt might " be expected to go off suddenly, like a powder-mill." Ch. XI.]

" I hope, Miss Berry," Mrs. Wickam would observe, " that you'll come into what little property there may be to leave. You deserve it, I am sure, for yours is a trying life. Though there don't seem much worth coming into—you'll excuse my being so open—in this dismal den."

Mrs. Pipchin takes it out of Master Bitherston

[Paul scores off Mrs. Pipchin, who in turn harasses Bitherston. So much so that he sets aside some bread and cheese towards his projected overland flight to India. Ch. XI.]

Generally speaking, indeed, Paul was anything but a boon to that young gentleman. The better understanding between Mrs.

Pipchin and himself, the harder the life Master Bitherston led. Little Miss Pankey did not escape the application of the principle; for whenever Paul had been particularly frank and confidential to Mrs. Pipchin, that worthy old soul would afterwards hunt her to bed with the keenness of a Nimrod. What with her daily shampooing, and the agitation of these nightly chaces, and her weekly agonies of separation from the aunt at Rottendean, and her apprehensions of never getting to heaven at last—which Mrs. Pipchin double locked and barred for every small offence, from sniffing upwards—it is probable that this young innocent would have died of despair, but for a change that came to pass in the affairs of the castle, and the consequent subsidence of Mrs. Pipchin into a more lethargic and a less inexorable state.

(To be continued)

THE GENTLE COMMENTATOR

THIS charmingly written little book* does not pretend to add anything to our knowledge of Dickens's life and does not consider his output from a literary standpoint. It relates the principal events of Dickens's life almost as if Miss Graham were idly turning over the pages of an album offering comments as she goes along. And the comments are of the gentlest nature; there is not a harsh expression or an unkind remark in the whole book. Even when she comes to the domestic tragedy of 1858 Miss Graham seems to regard the oncoming separation as a kind of inexorable fate, like the " cruel, crawling foam " of the tide that came across the Sands of Dee. It just happened. Nothing could hold it back; nobody was to blame; nobody sinned; many people were hurt; and many suffered in the future from its effects. And it may be that Miss Graham has discovered the true explanation without probing into all the speculations that have grown up round the incident. Miss Graham's economy in the use of dates amounts almost to total abstinence, with the consequence that the narrative lacks some proportion. Of Dickens's thirty-seven years of active writing life, no less than twenty (the final) years are dismissed in as many pages, at almost as great a pace as that of the Gadarene swine. Another " want " is an Index, the lack of which robs the book of much usefulness, as the headings of the chapters are too vague, unless the reader has already possessed some acquaintance with the sequence of events. But as a book to while away a pleasant hour in pleasant company it can be warmly recommended to those who like their reading in small quantities of agreeable flavour.

One thing is quite certain; it is possible in Miss Graham's company and guided by her understanding mind to realise why Dickens was loved in his lifetime, and why that universal love still goes out to his memory.

T.W.H.

* *The Story of Charles Dickens*, Eleanor Graham, Methuen 1os. 6d.

THE DICKENS HOUSE ENDOWMENT FUND
(WALTER DEXTER MEMORIAL)

	£	s.	d.	Branch Total to date £	s.	d.
Balham	5	6	0	40	0	0
Birmingham	10	0	0			
Mr. Yvon Hawkes	1	5	0	162	17	0
Blackpool	12	12	0	54	11	0
Boston—Miss Elizabeth Wright	1	0	0	54	15	4
Broadstairs—Miss G. Waterer	3	0	0	18	2	0
Christchurch—Miss B. Craig	1	0	0	45	16	0
Hatfield	5	0	0	22	2	6
Liverpool	23	7	0	200	0	0
Manchester—Mr. H. N. O. Needham	10	10	0			
Mrs. Pool: raffle	2	3	6			
Mr. F. R. Dean	2	2	0	260	3	3
Nottingham	30	0	0			
Mrs. Giles	1	10	0	311	13	6
St. Pancras	8	0	0	141	18	0
Sheffield	5	5	0	58	13	0
Southend	5	5	0	184	11	0
HEADQUARTERS						
Mr. E. E. Cook	50	0	0			
Anon	5	14	0			
Mr. and Mrs. Wisdom	5	0	0			
Mr. John Greaves (B.B.C.)	2	2	0			
Miss D. L. Minards (B.B.C.)	2	2	0			
Mrs. Seton Thompson	2	2	0			
Mr. T. V. Brewer: ramble	1	15	0			
Mr. E. W. Ganderton	1	1	0			
Mr. C. E. Page-Taylor	1	1	0			
Mr. W. A. MacGregor: lecture	1	1	0			
Anon.	1	0	0			
Miss M. E. Greatwood	1	0	0			
Mrs. S. L. Atkinson	1	0	0			
Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Lee	1	0	0			
Miss K. P. Skinner	0	14	0			
Mr. James McCurrach	0	10	9			
Mrs. Chappell	0	10	6	1884	18	0

Total to date: £7,824 10s. 6d.

BOZ

At a recent meeting at Headquarters one or two members raised the question of the correct pronunciation of Boz. Is it *Bŏz* or *Bōze*? In *The Dickensian*, 1925, p. 4, the Editor, Walter Dexter, authoritatively settled the matter in favour of Bŏz on the evidence of Dickens himself, the Dickens family usage, and of Forster's statement in his biography: "Boses, being shortened became Boz." May I point out also that Hablôt Browne took the pseudonym *Phiz* ("Fizz, Whizz, or some such name," as Hood remarked) to match Dickens's *Boz*, and that Carlyle facetiously—and descriptively—invented *Fuz* as a nickname for Forster? Booksellers and others have invariably used the shortened vowel. Is it too much to hope that the correct pronunciation will never again be queried and that all good Dickensians will always use *Bŏz*? T. W. H.

Henry VIII's Wine Cellar We cannot, alas, claim that Henry VIII was a Dickens character. But at any rate Dickens had some characteristic things to say about him. Almost the last piece of his great Palace of Whitehall is a beautifully groined wine cellar. Found to be in the way of the foundations of the new block of government offices recently completed, it was subjected to the unique and wonderful operation of being moved, both horizontally and vertically, or, shall we say, *circumlocutionarily*. The first organised party to visit it since its astonishing removal was organised by Mr. T. V. Brewer, for the Dickens Fellowship, on October 11th.

Contributions for this page are invited. Press cuttings not acceptable.

BLACKBURN

At the conclusion of a very successful term of office as President of the Blackburn Branch, Mr. John Lund presented a handsome pair of curtains, table cover and a locker for use in the room used for branch meetings. The curtains were embellished by Miss M. Fell, with a decorative border incorporating a Dickensian motif. Season 1951-52 was a very satisfactory one, interesting papers were contributed by several members and the dramatic section presented an entertaining dramatised reading of "Animal Magnetism," the farce often played in by Dickens himself. The social committee arranged some excellent events, the proceeds of which were devoted to the Dickens House Endowment Fund. Membership continues to increase and the branch subscription of 10s. 6d. is inclusive of *The Dickensian*. On the ordinary year's working the branch made a profit of twelve pounds. Altogether a very flourishing state of affairs.—L.M.

N.W. REGIONAL GROUP

The true Dickensian spirit has been well in evidence in the N.W. Regional Group during the past twelve months. There have been numerous inter-branch visits and exchanges of speakers. At the Annual Group Conference held in Blackburn, Miss M. Fell was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year and presided over a meeting, held in the Town Hall, attended by nearly 130 delegates from Manchester, Liverpool, Blackpool, Blackburn, Preston and Lytham St. Annes branches. The meeting was followed by high tea at the Crown Hotel and the evening was devoted to songs and recitals contributed by members of various branches. Early in July about 100 members of the group spent a pleasant afternoon at Lytham. The Mayor of Lytham St. Annes welcomed the Dickensians in the Lowther Pavilion, where tea was served. The arrangements were carried out by the Lytham St. Annes branch.—L.M.

MONTREAL

The Montreal Branch held its opening meeting on October 14th, when it celebrated the Jubilee of the parent organisation in London. It is devoting this winter to a study of *Pickwick Papers*. At the October meeting, the Hon. President, Mr. Whitfield Aston, who is one of Canada's leading amateur actors—he is noted, in particular, for his Serjeant Buzfuz—gave a review of the book of study, which was marked with humour, and revealed a knowledge of it that most Dickensian experts would envy. Tribute was paid to a former president, Mr. W. A. Messenger, who passed away with startling suddenness early last summer. Mr. Messenger, who was in his eighties, graduated from McGill University exactly sixty years ago. A teacher by profession, he was Principal of one of Montreal's leading schools for many years, and the news of his death brought many tributes from former pupils now resident in all parts of the Dominion.—A.P.

BALHAM

Mr. E. J. Fullwood founded the Balham Branch in 1923, and was Vice-President under Mr. B. W. Matz, who was their first

President. In 1929, Mr. Fullwood became President, an office he has held ever since. He kept the Branch together throughout the difficult war years and at the age of 88 retired from office last September, on leaving London for Coventry. In thanking him and Mrs. Fullwood for their long and valuable services to the Fellowship, we wish them every happiness in their retirement.
—J. G.

A welcome to England is extended to Miss Ella P. Hummel of Philadelphia, and Mrs. Floyd Yoder of Pittsburgh.

Our thanks to Mr. W. Haydon, retiring Secretary at Auckland, New Zealand, and congratulations to Miss J. C. Harper, his successor.

OBITUARY

Deep regret has been experienced throughout the Fellowship on the announcement of the death of Major-General Sir John Hay Beith ("Ian Hay"), our President 1948-50.

Liverpool Branch deeply regrets to announce the death of Mrs. B. Beck of Runcorn; a devoted member of the branch for more than twenty years. An ardent Dickensian and a Vice-President, Mrs. Beck was greatly valued for her unswerving support, given often under circumstances of great personal difficulty. She will be very greatly missed.—I.V.H.

We also regret to announce the death of:
Edwin T. Marble, Worcester, Mass.
Miss Hobart Studds, Sydney.
Miss Fay Myddleton, Headquarters.
C. H. Redman, Headquarters.
Mrs. Muriel Struthers, Manchester.

DICKENS FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1953

The forty-seventh Annual Conference will be held at Manchester at Whitsun, from Fri., May 22nd, to Mon., May 25th, inclusive. Details will reach Branch Secretaries early in the New Year. Members interested should ask their Secretary about them or write to Miss Marion Pool, 19 Sandilands Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester.

LONDON MEETINGS

(At Swedenborg Hall, 20-22 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1, at 7 p.m., unless otherwise stated.)

Tues. Dec. 9—Recital, *A Christmas Carol*. Mr. JOHN GREAVES.
Fri. ,, 12—Dickens Recital by Mr. R. C. D. SHUCKBURGH. Crosby Hall, Chelsea, 7.30 p.m. In aid of the Dickens House Endowment Fund. Tickets 10*s*. 6*d*., 7*s*. 6*d*., 5*s*., from Mrs. A. Waley, 8a Mulberry Walk, S.W.3.
Mon. Jan. 12—Lantern Lecture, *The Pickwickian Pilgrimages*. Mr. GEORGE F. YOUNG.
Sat. Feb. 7—**Dickens Birthday Dinner,** Waldorf Hotel. Tickets now on sale, 25*s*.
Sun. ,, 8—Dickens Commemorative Service, Southwark Cathedral, 6.30 p.m.
Fri. ,, 20—*Dickens and Wilkie Collins*. Mr. KENNETH ROBINSON, M.P.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1951.

1950	LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
—	Sundry Creditors		16 0 0
	Life Membership Fund—		
575	As at 31st December, 1950		574 17 6
833	Special Reserve		833 7 6
	Costume Department Fund—		
	Balance as at 31st December, 1950	141 18 1	
142	*Add* Excess of Income over Expenditure for year	170 16 3	
			312 14 4
	Advertising Fund—		
	As at 31st December, 1950	27 18 7	
28	*Less* Expended during year	27 18 7	
76	Jubilee Fund		84 10 11
	Walter Dexter Memorial Fund—		
	As at 31st December, 1950	4 0 3	
4	Profit on Sale of Badges	2 7 2	
			6 7 5
66	Unexpired Balance of Receipts for Charitable Purposes		41 12 3
	Income and Expenditure Account—		
	Balance at 31st December, 1950	824 19 11	
	Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for year	82 9 7	
		907 9 6	
825	*Less* Loss on *The Dickensian*	20 2 5	
			887 7 1
£2549			£2756 17 0

1950.	ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	Life Membership Fund Investment, at cost—		
575	£549 16*s.* 1*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock		574 17 3
	(Market Value 31st December, 1951, £489 6*s.* 6*d.*)		
	Investment of Special Donation, at cost—		
105	£118 5*s.* 10*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock		105 0 0
	(Market Value, 31st December, 1951, £105 5*s.* 7*d.*)		
	Library, Pictures and Furniture (including items exhibited in The Dickens House Museum and Library)—		
		33 6 0	
	Addition during year	4 0 0	
		37 6 0	
33	*Less* Depreciation	3 15 0	
			33 11 0
75	The Tyrrell Collection of Photographic Negatives, at cost		75 0 0
	Costume Department—		
	Costumes at Nominal Value	100 0 0	
142	Cash in Hands of Assistant Secretary as at 31st December, 1951	212 14 4	
			312 14 4
	The Dickens House—		
550	Loan Account	550 0 0	
10	*Add* Interest accrued thereon	10 0 0	
428	Current Account	210 0 0	
			770 0 0
	The Dickensian—		
	Current Account	91 4 3	
77	*Less* Loss for the year	20 2 5	
			71 1 10
11	Stock of Badges on hand		— — —
22	Amounts Paid in Advance		8 18 0
	Balance at Bankers	822 6 6	
521	*Less* Petty Cash overdrawn	16 11 11	
			805 14 7
£2549			£2756 17 0

We have examined the above Balance Sheet with the books and vouchers of The Dickens Fellowship and certify the same to be in accordance therewith. We have also verified the Investments.

3 York Street, Manchester 2.
9th May, 1952.

(*Signed*) MORRIS, GREGORY & CO.,
Chartered Accountants,
Hon. Auditors.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Dr. Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31st December, 1951. Cr.

1950.	Expenditure.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
96	To Rent (including Insurance, Lighting and Heating) and Rates	95 12 0	
550	,, Assistant Secretary's Salary ... £550 0 0		
275	*Less* Contribution by Dickens House 275 0 0		
— 275		275 0 0	
54	,, Printing and Stationery	44 16 7	
174	,, General Expenses and Postages	185 3 3	
599		600 11 10	
218	*Less* Amount charged to *The Dickensian* £218 18 0		
26	Amount charged to Costume Department ... 26 0 0		
— 244		244 18 0	
355			355 13 10
122	,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Headquarters' Members		118 18 3
14	,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Branch Secretaries		14 5 9
34	,, Meetings		30 13 6
14	,, Contribution to Charitable Purposes Account		11 18 0
4	,, Depreciation of Library Pictures and Furniture		3 15 0
79	,, Balance being Excess of Income over Expenditure ...		82 9 7
£622			£617 13 11

1950.	Income.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	By Subscriptions—		
496	Headquarters' Members	504 11 6	
83	Branches...	81 10 5	
12	,, Interest on Investment of Life Membership Fund, less tax	11 16 6	
			597 18 5
10	,, Interest on Loan to Dickens House		10 0 0
21	,, Refund of Income Tax		9 15 6
£622			£617 13 11

GEORGE MINTER presents

CHARLES DICKENS'S

"THE PICKWICK PAPERS"

starring—

JAMES HAYTER · NIGEL PATRICK

JAMES DONALD · KATHLEEN HARRISON

and guest stars—

JOYCE GRENFELL · HERMIONE GINGOLD

DONALD WOLFIT

co-starring—

HERMIONE BADDELEY · HARRY FOWLER

and—

DIANE HART . GEORGE ROBEY

WILLIAM HARTNELL . JOAN HEAL

WALTER FITZGERALD . SAM COSTA

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